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Illustrations

FOR

Sermons and Instructions

Definitions, Word-Pictures, Exemplifications, Quotations, and Stories, explanatory of Catholic Doctrine and Practice.

Gathered from the Sacred Scriptures, from the Works of the Fathers and Saints, and from the Writings of recent Authors and Preachers of Note.

EDITED BY

REVEREND CHARLES J. CALLAN

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

In submitting to the public the present collection of Illustrations for Sermons and Instructions, the editor wishes respectfully to call the attention of its readers to the fact that it does not in any sense pretend to be complete. Both as to the number of subjects touched upon, and the manner of treating these subjects, the editor is, therefore, fully aware that this compilation cannot be considered other than limited and fragmentary.

The order followed in this volume and the method of arranging the quotations for the various topics herein developed may, indeed, be considered logical, at least in a general way; but even in these particulars a strict and exact sequence especially in minor details and in the number of points treated under each chapter and heading, has not been insisted on or aimed at. The compiler has simply put together under a number of headings which, for the most part, naturally follow one another, a collection of notes, thoughts and Scriptural citations gathered through years of careful reading. And as it was not at any time his intention or desire to arrange a volume for publication, these quotations, although from a large number of authors, represent only those writers and preachers whom he has been accustomed to read most frequently. This will explain why so many great preachers and writers, past and present, do not figure in this work. It is, in truth, evident that if anything approaching a complete collection of representative quotations from all the great Catholic preachers and writers on religious subjects were to be given, there would necessarily result not one, but many large volumes. Thus the work would become too cumbersome for convenient use, and its practical value would be greatly diminished.

Let it further be noted, as already hinted, that the publication of this collection of notes has been entirely due, not to the compiler's wishes or choice, but to the urgent suggestions and positive action of friends, who, knowing of the existence of the collection, have earnestly felt that, through publication, others should be given the pleasure and the benefit of reading and pondering its useful contents. Only after long and repeated urging, consequently, have friends of the

compiler succeeded in obtaining the consent necessary that th collection should be published.

But aside from any part that any one has had in collecting the notes, or in arranging and editing this volume, it will be clear to t reader, from the number and high character of the authors quote that such a collection ought to be very useful for preaching a meditation. Assuredly the thoughts and words of great thinkers, profound scholars, of devout and religious men and women, mu at all times be profitable to all, and, in particular, to those who state of life requires that they should give to others, by preachi and writing, that sound doctrine and spiritual nourishment which t life of the soul demands. It is thoughts and ideas that they wh would speak to others need. Given the training and education th belong to each one's calling in life, it is not so much long treatises a volumes on single questions that one requires, as thoughts and ide on the particular various questions which one desires to treat. Hen the writer or preacher on doctrinal and religious topics needs though —he needs the thoughts and ideas of others to stimulate and set motion his own stream of thought.

The subjects discussed in this work are partly dogmatic, part moral. There has been no special attempt to insist more on the o than on the other, so that fairly equal attention has been extended both. In view, therefore, of the variety of the topics considered, a in particular of the number and quality of the authors quoted, it the earnest hope of the compiler and of the editor that the prese volume will be found servicable to a large circle of readers. Ma the instructive and uplifting thoughts of the great authors he quoted be a stimulus and an inspiration to many more whose sacr vocation it is to teach others the way to truth, to virtue, and eternal life.

CHARLES J. CALLAN, O. P.

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CHAPTER I

GOD; THE BLESSED TRINITY; THE DIVINE PERSONS

[NOTE.—*The quotations are invariably from approved Catholic sources, unless otherwise designated.—Some subjects are referred to under various heads for which consult the Subject Index.*]

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

I asked the earth, and it said, 'Tis not I. And all things therein confessed the same. I asked the sea and the deeps and the living things thereof, and they answered: We are not thy God, seek higher above us. I asked the fleeting air above, and the whole region of it, with its inhabitants, cried out: Anaximenes is mistaken, I am not God. I asked the heavens, the sun, the moon, and the stars: Neither are we, said they, the God whom thou seekest. And I said to all these things which stand around the doors of my flesh: You have told me concerning my God, that you are not He, give me at least some tidings of Him. And they all cried out with a loud voice: It is He that made us. My asking was my considering them, and their answering was the beauty I discovered in them.—*St. Augustine.*

That which is known of God is manifest in them. For God hath manifested it unto them.—For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made: His Eternal Power also and Divinity: so that they are inexcusable.—Rom. I, 19, 20.

The pagan philosopher Epicurus said to the atheist, Galenus: "Observe your body and its wonderful structure, and then tell me whether you still doubt the existence of a God! Behold, I will give you a hundred years in which to reflect upon it, so that you may examine whether you can discover a single fault in the entire human body, or whether you could, perhaps, alter any of the members of the body without thereby depriving it at the same time of beauty, usefulness, power and strength. Surely, no man, only a God was capable of creating such a glorious model, such a wonderful masterpiece!"

Before Abraham was made, I am.—John VIII, 58.

He that cometh to God must believe that He is.—Heb. XI, 6.

The fool said in his heart: There is no God.—Ps. LII, 1.

Overpowering proofs of intelligence and benevolent design l around us, showing to us, through Nature, the influence of a fr will; and teaching us that all living beings depend upon one eve acting Creator and Ruler.—*Lord Kelvin (Non-Cath.).*

The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmame declareth the work of His hands.—Day to day uttereth speech, a night to night showeth knowledge.—There are no speeches nor la guages where their voices are not heard.—Ps. XVIII, 2-4.

In the beginning, O Lord, Thou foundest the earth: and t heavens are the works of Thy hands.—They shall perish, but Th remainest: and all of them shall grow old like a garment: and as vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed.—B Thou art always the self-same, and Thy years shall not fail.—Ps. C 26-28.

By faith we understand that the world was framed by the Wo of God, that from invisible things visible things might be made.
—Heb. XI,

Heaven and earth shall pass, but My words shall not pass.
—Matt. XXIV, 3

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD OUR CONSOLATION

There was at one time in the United States Army a certa General, known to be an atheist.

His wife was a good Christian, and tried to bring up the daughter, their only child, in the fear of God; and although her fath endeavoured to instil into her mind his own wicked principles, t grace of God enabled her to remain firm in her faith.

It happened that she became very ill, and lay in danger of deat Her father, who loved her with intense affection, watched by h bedside continually; but everyone saw that she was approaching h end.

"O my dearest father," she said to him one day, "you see I a at the point of death, and I must soon leave you. You have oft told me that there is no God; and my dear mother has taught r that there is a God, who will make us eternally happy in the ne life, if we adore and serve Him here on earth. Tell me now, wheth I am to believe her or you?"

The General for some moments did not answer. He did not wi to say to his dying child what he knew in his heart to be false, a at the same time he did not want to acknowledge the existence God in the presence of his associates in unbelief, some of whom we about. The contest within him was only for a few moments. H looked on his darling child, and his eyes met hers. In an insta he exclaimed: "O my child, do not heed my words; believe on what your mother has taught you."

Those in the room who heard these words looked at him in amaz

ment. "Surely, General," they said to him, "you do not really mean what you have just now said."

He turned towards them, and, pointing to his dying child, answered: "My friends, it is indeed more convenient to live according to what we had pretended to believe, but at the hour of death it is only the ancient faith in the existence of the one true God that will give us consolation."

WHAT IS GOD?

Well might the ancient heathen shrink from answering, when a king, his patron, asked him what God was! He begged for a day to consider his reply; at the end of it, for two more; and, when the two were ended, for four besides; for in truth he found that meditation, instead of bringing him towards the solution of the problem, did but drive him back; and the more he questioned, the vaster grew the theme, and where he drew one conclusion, thence issued forth a hundred fresh difficulties to confound his reason. For in truth the being and attributes of God are a subject, not for reason simply, but for faith also, and we must accept His own word about Himself.

—*Cardinal Newman.*

ETERNITY OF GOD

Before the mountains were made, or the earth and the world was formed; from eternity and to eternity Thou art God.

—*Ps.* LXXXIX, 2.

ONE GOD

Our God is one Lord.—Deut. VI, 4.

I am the first, and I am the last, and besides Me there is no God.

—*Is.* XLIV, 6.

I am the Lord, and there is none else: there is no God besides me.

—*Is.* XLV, 5.

One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.—Eph. IV, 5.

THE WISDOM OF GOD

The "wisdom" of God is that attribute by which God ordains all things to certain ends and so arranges that everything created fulfils its destiny, according to His designs. From that wisdom all the laws of this universe emanate, and that wisdom forever accomplishes its purposes unerringly. There is no such thing as frustrating God's designs. He lays His plans without consulting any one, He suffers those plans to be frustrated for a time by human intermeddling, He laughs at the conceit of men who dream that they can interrupt the courses of His Providence, and then in His own good time He accomplishes His object, and sets at naught the childish interference of His creatures. Nay, He often uses the wickedness of men for His own wise purposes, and is baffling that wickedness when it boasts that it is successful. Eve ate that apple in Paradise, and brought a curse upon her race. But that curse brought an infinite blessing in Christ Jesus. That lamp is burning before this Tabernacle because the Son of God is there; the Son of God would not be there if Eve had

not sinned. Full of fury and envy and sin and hatred, His enemies nailed Christ to the tree on that afternoon nineteen hundred years ago. That sin built this magnificent temple, that sin brought you and me here together to-day. Peter, the poor fisherman, knelt trembling on the sands of the Sea of Galilee. He heard a few words from His Master. Hence the oldest dynasty in the world, the empire that is destined to witness unshaken and unchanged the rise and fall of the empires of the world. For three hundred years the Church was smothered in the blood of her children; that blood was the seed of Christians, of the hundreds of millions of Catholics who profess to-day the same creed for which these martyrs died.

—*P. A. Sheehan.*

O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable His ways!—For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?—Rom. XI, 33, 34.

The eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and His ears unto their prayers.—Ps. XXXIII, 16.

I know their thoughts and what they are about to do this day, before that I bring them into the land which I have promised them.
—*Deut.* XXXI, 21.

The Lord beholdeth the ways of man, and considereth all his steps.—Prov. V. 21.

The whole world before Thee is as the least grain of the balance, and as a drop of the morning dew, that falleth down upon the earth.
—*Wis.* XI, 23.

THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD

According to St. Cyril of Jerusalem, some pagans adored the sun as their god, that during the night they might, in the absence of the sun, do what they pleased, without fear of divine chastisement. The conduct of these people was very criminal; but at least they were careful not to sin in presence of their god. But Christians know that God is present in all places, and that He sees all things. Accordingly they deserve more severe condemnation if they sin.

Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy Face?—If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there: if I descend into hell, Thou art present.—If I take my wings early in the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea:—Even there also shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me.—And I said: Perhaps darkness shall cover me: and night shall be my light in my pleasures.—But darkness shall not be dark to Thee, and night shall be light as the day: the darkness thereof, and the light thereof, are alike to Thee.—For Thou hast possessed my reins: Thou hast protected me from my mother's womb.
—*Ps.* CXXXVIII, 7-13.

Boleslaus IV., King of Poland, had the greatest affection for his father. He got a portrait of his father, put it into a beautiful setting, and hung it around his neck.

Every time he wanted to say or do anything of importance, he would take this portrait into his hand, look at it for a moment, and lovingly kiss it. "O my father," he would say from time to time, "God forbid that I should ever say anything or do anything that would not please you, if you were beside me."

God is always beside us, and if we, like King Boleslaus, always thought of that, we would never do anything wrong.

A learned man, who did not believe in God, once met a simple countryman going to church to hear Mass. He said to him: "My good man, where are you going?" "To church, sir," he answered. "And what do you do in church?" "I worship God," replied the countryman. "Tell me," said the other, in a tone of mockery, "whether your God is a great or a little God." "He is both, sir," said the man reverently. "How can that be?" "He is so great," answered the countryman, "that the Heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, and He is so little that He can live in my heart."

WHO ART IN HEAVEN

To all who have a correct idea of God, it is clear, that He is everywhere present. This, however, is not to be understood as though He were spread out into parts, filling and governing one place with one part, another place with another; for God is a spirit, and therefore indivisible. And who would presume to circumscribe within the limits of any place, or confine to any particular spot, God, who says of Himself: "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" (Jer. xxiii, 24). This again is to be understood to mean, that by His power and virtue God embraces heaven and earth, and the things that are contained in heaven and earth; not that He Himself is contained in any place; for God is present with all things, either creating them, or preserving them when created, whilst He Himself is confined to no region, is circumscribed by no limits, nor so defined as to prevent His being present everywhere with His nature and power; as the blessed David expresses in these words: "If I ascend into heaven, thou art there" (Ps. cxxxviii, 8; Amos. ix, 2). But although present in all places and things, and as we have said, circumscribed by no limits, yet God is frequently said in the Sacred Scriptures to have His dwelling in Heaven, because the heavens which we behold are the noblest part of the world; undecaying; excelling all other objects in power, magnitude, and beauty, and moving in uniform and steady revolutions. To elevate, therefore, the soul of man to the contemplation of His infinite power and majesty, which shine forth pre-eminently in the work of the heavens, God declares in the divine writings, that He dwells in the heavens. He also frequently declares, which is the fact, that there is no part of the universe that is not embraced by the Divine nature and power there present.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE

Of Him, and by Him, and in Him are all things.—Rom. XI, 36.

At the beginning of the eleventh century, England was governed by a pious king whose name was Canute. Some of his courtiers, who wanted to flatter him in order to obtain his favour, one day said to him: "O King, thou art indeed the greatest of all kings; thou art master of the seas, which obey thy voice and are submissive to thy will." Canute said nothing in answer to these words, but gave orders that his throne should be placed upon the beach as the tide was coming in. When this was done, he went thither with his courtiers and sat down. When the waves were coming near to the place where he sat, he with a loud voice cried out to them: "O waves, I command you to retire, and not dare to approach your royal master." But the water came up, heedless of his words, and, rushing onwards, wet his feet, and those of the courtiers with him. Then, turning towards them, he said: "O foolish men, behold how little is the power of a king. Learn from what you see that God alone has power to command the sea, and to say to it, 'Thus far shalt thou go and no farther.'"

THE MERCY OF GOD

The mercy of our God towards us, His sinful creatures, is a mercy the very angels never knew. One would almost think we were necessary to His happiness, so anxiously does He labour for our welfare. Not even our blackest ingratitude, nor our most heinous crimes, nor our most inveterate perversity turn Him away from us nor can induce Him to abandon us and deal with us as we deserve. Strange, is it not? Yet how consoling, how encouraging! He seems to pity us more than He blames; even as we pity a wayward lad or lass who knows no better than to forsake a cozy home, fond parents, peace and happiness, in pursuit of a bubble of independence, a will-o'-wisp of pleasure whose false colours and lying promises fascinate and deceive; who runs in the path of misery, despair and eventual perdition with no eye nor ear for the breakers ahead or for the appealing voice of mercy behind that pleads to return—poor, foolish thing! No thought of vengeance or punishment. The rainbow is in the heavens. It reminds Him of His oath never again to allow the upper hand to justice against sinful man on earth. Mercy is ever His chosen weapon.

Can we now deny that God is all mercy? In mercy He created us, in mercy redeemed us, in mercy preserves us, in mercy bears with our repeated transgressions, in mercy spares us, in mercy pursues us through the endless labyrinth of our sinning. In mercy He forgives us and brings us back to Himself when once the knee bends in contrition and the heart is softened with sorrow. We are to Him, each of us, however numerous our sins, however desperate our condition, a lost sheep, a lost goat, a prodigal son. While there is hope, He waits. There is hope while there is life.

—*John H. Stapleton.*

The Lord is patient and full of mercy.—Num. XIV, 18.

As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear Him.—For He knoweth our frame.

He remembereth that we are dust.—Man's days are as grass: as the flower of the field so shall he flourish.—Ps. CII, 13-15.

According to His greatness, so also is His mercy with Him.
—Eccl. II, 23.

I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore have I drawn thee, taking pity on thee.—Jer. XXXI, 3.

He made the little and the great, and He hath equally care of all.
—Wis. VI, 8.

THE JUSTICE AND THE MERCY OF GOD

It is a mystery to us how justice and mercy can co-exist, and both be infinite, and both be exercised at the same moment towards the same person. We know in our experience of strict justice overriding mercy, and of mercy setting aside the claims of justice. But we cannot imagine what it is to be most rigidly just and most tenderly merciful in the same case. Absolutely free forgiveness and the exaction of ample atonement are with us contradictory things. If a judge were always tender and lenient to the offending party, this would be, not so much a sign of exceeding God-like mercy, as of weak character or of sympathy with crime. On the other hand, if he always enforced the most rigid justice, he would prove himself to be hard-hearted and devoid of the sense of mercy. If such a man were really tender-hearted, and at the same time a lover of justice, he would often find that these two sentiments were in contradiction, and that one would have to yield. Hence, some persons picture to themselves two different, contradictory, qualities in God. They imagine Him changing from anger to love, from mercy to justice; at one time His mercy predominating over His justice, and again His anger at sin extinguishing all mercy; each at times neutralizing the other.

But it is not so with God. God is one, single, simple. There is no multiplicity of differing qualities in Him, no opposition of attribute to distribute, no limitation of one by another, no change of moods at different times. God always sees in sin the most horrible of evils, the antithesis of all goodness; an outrage on His Majesty; an enemy that would destroy His being, if that were possible; and He hates it with a necessary and unchangeable detestation. His mercy does not cause Him to make little of sin, to gloss it over, to close His eyes to its enormity. Still, God loves the sinner with an infinite love, compassionates his weakness, and calls him to repentance; for the sinner is God's own creation, made in His image, and purchased at the price of His Son's most Precious Blood and death. There is no opposition in God between justice and mercy. His love and anger are the same; they are His indivisible, unchangeable essence. His love of good is identical with His hatred of evil. He is not more tolerant towards sin on account of His merciful goodness; and even when He punishes most rigidly He is still merciful. This co-existence of justice and mercy in punishment is the divine attribute of clemency: "When thou art angry, thou wilt remember mercy" (Hab. iii, 2).—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE JUSTICE OF GOD

God is not unjust, that He should forget your work, and the love you have shown in His Name, you who have ministered and do minister to the Saints.—Heb. VI, 10.

The Lord will reward every one according to His justice and His faithfulness.—I. Kings, XXVI, 23.

I am the Lord Who search the heart and prove the reins: Who give to every one according to his way, and according to the fruit of his devices.—Jer. XVII, 10.

Who will render to every man according to his works:—To them indeed who, according to patience in good work, seek glory and honour and incorruption, Eternal Life;—But to them that are contentious and who obey not the truth, but give credit to iniquity, wrath and indignation.—Rom. II, 6-8.

THE FORBEARANCE OF GOD

Because sentence is not speedily pronounced against the evil, the children of men commit evils without any fear.—Eccl. VIII, 11.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

In all this wonderful providence God preserves His unchangeableness. He does not have to keep stepping in to put things right. If a stone rolls down the mountain side it fulfils eternal laws. If the lion goes abroad to seek its prey, it is because of the unchanging law of brute instinct. If man is allowed freedom in his actions, it is only because God wills those actions to be the result of man's freedom. And if at any time something seems to happen contrary to the laws of nature, a miracle, it is not that the laws have been suspended, but that for some Divine purpose, these events have been foreseen and arranged, and so are the fulfilment rather than the alteration of the Divine Will. God reaches "from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly." Thus all things that happen, if they be not influenced by the free will of man, happen of necessity. Many things seem to happen by chance. The lightning strikes an oak-tree and misses the man standing by. He thinks he is very lucky. But in reality there is no chance whatever in the incident. It is all due to the working out of fixed laws. Things seem to happen by chance simply because we can not see all the circumstances. Huxley spoke a great truth when he said that chance was but an alias for ignorance.

But when we are face to face with suffering in reality, then it is that we need our faith in God's Providence. Aware of our own sinfulness we might bravely bear our own sufferings. But the difficulty presses heavily upon us when we see those suffer whom we love and know to be innocent.

The newspapers told us of a sad case recently. A young couple, father and mother, were putting their children to bed, their only two. The mother was bathing the baby while the father played with the elder boy. The boy, in his delight, jumped from his father's arms, fell downstairs and was killed. The mother rushed downstairs to her

son, and, in her distress, forgot the child upstairs. Then when she did return it was only to find her baby drowned. What shall we say in the presence of such a calamity? What could the mother say? What could the father say? We can not *see* the good of such effects of God's Providence. But by a strong act of faith we can *believe* that God is good, and He loves all things that are, and hates none of the things that He has made. We may try to fathom the mystery, but our safer plan will be to bow down and adore.

—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

Give not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; and say not before the Angel: There is no providence: lest God be angry at thy words, and destroy all the works of thy hands.—Eccl. V, 5.

Every best gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with Whom there is no change, nor shadow of alteration.—Jas. I, 17.

Who covereth the heaven with clouds, and prepareth rain for the earth: Who maketh grass to grow on the mountains, and herbs for the service of men.—Who giveth to beasts their food: and to the young ravens that call upon Him.—Ps. CXLVI, 8, 9.

A priest had just concluded a sermon on Divine Providence, when a man came to him and said, "I have heard your sermon, but I am a proof of the contrary of what you said. For me there is no Providence! I have a wife and family, and work hard to support them. I've done no harm to any one, and for twenty years I have tried to live as a good Christian; but all in vain; I feel ready to drown myself, for I have bills due the end of the month, and am quite unable to meet them. I am lost, and would rather die than live!" "Well, my good man, you yourself shall become proof of the Providence of God! How much do you owe?" "Nearly 2,000 dollars." "Then, here are 2,500: this sum was given me some days ago to dispose of for the relief of the unfortunate. Go, pay your bills, and remember there *is* a Providence!"

Be not solicitous, therefore, saying: What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed?—For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things.—Matt. VI, 31-32.

Remove the pendulum from the works of a clock only for a moment and they stop immediately. Turn off the water-course from a mill, or stop its supply, and at once the motion of the wheel will cease, the whole mill will be at a standstill. Launch a well equipped boat with sails, oars, etc., upon the high seas, but place no man at the helm to conduct its course, and it will be tossed hither and thither, become the sport of the winds and waves, finally be wrecked and go to pieces. Not even a little log hut can last long without the care of a master's hand; first the roof, then the flooring, at another time the walls, are damaged by the weather, by rain, cold, etc., and

they have to be repaired or rebuilt. How is it possible, then, that this vast universe—heaven and earth, with everything that they contain—could have lasted so many thousands of years if the hand of God had not preserved it?—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns: and your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they?—*Matt.* VI, 26.

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin.—And if the grass of the field, which is to-day, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe: how much more you, O ye of little faith!—*Matt.* VI, 28, 30.

If we do not wish to act against the decrees of Providence we must (1), avoid all solicitude which extends itself over temporal affairs to such an extent as to interfere with our happiness; (2), and all solicitude which causes us to work beyond our strength and prevents us from taking needed rest and recreation; (3), all solicitude which makes us timid and faint-hearted, believing that the future holds nothing but adversity and misery for us.—*St. Thomas Aquinas.*

How very small then must be our partial insight into God's plans! A fly lights upon a great picture, say the Sistine Madonna of Raphael. It sees only a little black patch on the hem of Our Lady's robe. It recognizes nothing of the superb composition of form and colour of which the black patch is a portion. So it comes about that if we look only to the particular end of things and neglect their final end, we get a distorted view of God's Providence. Relying merely on our own infinitesimal outlook we are bound to experience the difficulty of God's seeming improvidence, seeming forgetfulness, seeming weakness, seeming unkindness.

The dark night comes to every soul sooner or later and causes it to lament as Sion lamented of old: "The Lord hath forsaken me, the Lord hath forgotten me." But God replies as He did to Sion: "Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will I not forget thee."

—*Thomas F. Gerrard.*

The eyes of the Lord behold all the earth.—II. *Par.* XVI, 9.

While the persecution of Decius was at its height, St. Felix of Nola was one of those whom the persecutors of the Church were most anxious to arrest; but God, who desired to make use of His servant, hid him from his enemies who pursued him.

One day, while he was instructing and exhorting the faithful, those who were sent to look for him came near, and Felix fled and concealed himself in an opening of a wall. As there was no door to conceal him, he would undoubtedly have been captured had not God caused a spider to weave its web over the opening.

The soldiers arriving at the place, and finding it covered with a web, thick and unbroken, thought that it would be folly to imagine

that anyone could enter without breaking the web, and they passed by, and hastened to look for him elsewhere.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD AND MAN'S FREEDOM

Must we then suppose that this all-embracing care of God and our full submission to Him mean the stagnation of our mind and affections? Are we to be merely as the brush in the painter's hand or as the clay in the potter's? That would be the degeneration of this most sublime and most consoling doctrine into a debasing and enervating fatalism. Must we suppose that God has given us a law of salvation and has not left us free to obey it? That He has commanded us to believe in Him and to love Him with all our strength and yet has not given us the strength of will and the freedom of heart to offer our faith and love? Far from it, for Divine Providence supposes human effort. The ravens sow not; the lilies of the field spin not; but man must labour and strive; he must seek, and seek first the kingdom of God, then shall other things be given unto him. Man is intelligent. Man is free. His life upon earth is a life of progress. Starting from the border of nothingness, a creature of capacities and capabilities, he is to be filled in time with material and mental good, with moral and social good, with human and heavenly good.—*Thomas Burke, C. S. P.*

PREDESTINATION

According to St. Augustine, predestination is the preparation of grace; it is nothing more than God's Prescience and the preparation of God's benefits, by which are certainly saved all those whom He saves. St. Thomas says that predestination is the manner by which God guides reasonable creatures to eternal life, the preparation of grace for the present life. According to this, we can consider predestination under a twofold aspect: as grace without which we can do nothing as regards eternal life, and under the aspect of glory which is granted to those that have been faithful to grace.

Although God gives to all men the graces necessary for salvation it is likewise a Catholic dogma that He does not give to all the same measure of grace; that there are particular graces, graces of choice, which He grants rather to one than to another, and that He reserves, from all eternity, eternal life to those who shall have persevered until the end. In other words, we must admit, on the part of God, the predestination of a certain number of men to eternal life. "This belief," says St. Augustine, "has always been that of the Church of Jesus Christ." Such is, besides, the teaching of Holy Scripture. At the last Judgment our Lord will say, addressing the elect: "Come ye Blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. XXV, 34). Those who are predestined to glory will infallibly be saved: the decree of predestination is as infallible as divine Prescience. Thus the number of the predestined is fixed and unchangeable; it will be neither increased or diminished, because God's Prescience cannot be deceived. Nevertheless those who work out their salvation do so freely; they always preserve their free will, and can resist grace if they so wish.

It is of faith that predestination is gratuitous. Eternal life is a

grace of God, the grace of graces, which supposes all other graces. Nevertheless, predestination considered under the aspect of glory, also supposes the merits of the just. Eternal life is at once a grace of God, and the reward for good works done in the state of grace. It is a Catholic dogma that by the works of the justified man, or by the good works which he performs with God's grace and the merits of Jesus Christ, he himself really merits eternal life.

—Ecclesiastical Dictionary.

WHAT PREDESTINATION DOES NOT MEAN

This foreknowledge of God, and the preparation of some souls for eternal glory, and the assent to the further loss of others, is part of God's Providence. It results from His knowledge of all future things, from His goodness and His justice. This Predestination and Reprobation do not mean that God has called some beings into existence for the special purpose of separating them from the rest and condemning them to hell. The enemies of Christianity have been pleased to assert that this is a Christian doctrine. But it is Christian only in this sense, that it was taught during a couple of centuries by the members of a small and now almost extinct heresy, the Calvinists, who called themselves Christians, but who were cut off from the Christian Church on account of this and other errors. It is distinctly a Protestant doctrine, and is justly condemned by the Catholic Church as false and blasphemous.—*Bishop Bellord.*

PREDESTINATION DEPENDENT ON MAN'S OWN WILL

St. Ambrose teaches that even if a man knew that he was reprobate from God, "the Lord will know how to recall the sentence, if thou knowest how to amend thy ways of sin." In confirmation of this we have the example of Jonas and Nineveh.

In the depths of eternity God knew of each man, his strength and his weakness, his excuses and his guilt, his sin and his repentance. He could sum up each man's life, and see his final decision as to serving or resisting God. Knowing thus His own, God elects them to eternal happiness. God does not predestine all men to glory as He destines them for life and grace; He can not do so, for they control their destiny. Although predestination is entirely from God, it is yet dependent on man's own will.—*Bishop Bellord.*

If that nation against which I have spoken shall repent of their evil, I also will repent of the evil that I have thought to do to them.—And I will suddenly speak of a nation and of a kingdom, to build up and plant it.—If it shall do evil in My sight, that it obey not My voice, I will repent of the good that I have spoken to do unto it.—Jer. XVIII, 8-10.

To help you understand that divine Foreknowledge does not interfere with the human free will, just remember that God knows, for instance, what you will do, and where you will go, after leaving this church, nevertheless you are absolutely free to do what you like, and

to go where you please. Indeed, it is impossible for you not to exercise your free will.

THE SOUL'S DESIRE FOR GOD

St. Thomas of Aquin could think only of God, could speak only of God; nothing gave him any pleasure but to hear about God. If sometimes he was in the company of those who were conversing about other things, he seemed to take no interest in their conversation; it was evident his thoughts were on something very different from what they were thinking of. Once when residing in Naples, Brother Dominic Caserte heard a voice proceeding from the crucifix, saying to him: "Thou hast written well of me, Thomas; what recompense dost thou desire?" He answered: "None other than Thyself, O Lord."

Thou makest it delightful to him to praise Thee; because Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are not at rest till they rest in Thee.—*St. Augustine.*

As the compass needle is invariably turned towards the North, God has impressed our souls with a natural inclination that makes them invariably turn toward Him.—*St. Augustine.*

THE WORSHIP OF GOD

Can it be much to serve Thee whom the whole creation is bound to serve? It ought not to seem much to me to serve Thee; but this seems rather great and wonderful to me, that Thou vouchsafest to receive one so wretched and unworthy into they service, and to associate him to Thy beloved servants.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE NAME OF GOD

St. Francis of Assisi always pronounced the Name of God with profound veneration. If by chance he saw lying on the ground a piece of paper on which the Name of God was written, he reverently took it up, and placed it carefully in his cell. He also counselled all his disciples to do likewise.

THE HEART OF MAN, GOD'S TEMPLE

God dwells much rather in the temple fashioned by His own hands than in a temple built by the hands of men. Much sweeter is to Him a pious and devout heart than incense.—*St. Thomas of Villanova.*

THE BLESSED TRINITY

THE BLESSED TRINITY

There is One God; for what we mean by God, is the Supreme Being, and there can be but One Being Supreme over all.

In this One Supreme Being there are Three distinct Persons, that is to say, each Person has the whole Substance of God; for God's Substance, His Supreme Being, cannot be divided. As the whole substance of the human soul subsists indivisibly in every separate

faculty of our being, so the whole Substance of God subsists in each Divine Person. Yet are not the Three Persons faculties or attributes of God; for attributes in God have no existence distinct from His Substance; and when we speak of God's attributes we merely put into words our imperfect ideas of Him. Properly speaking, God is not just, good, wise, powerful; but is Himself essentially Justice, Goodness, Wisdom and Power.

So in like manner God is essentially Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; Eternal Substance, Knowledge, and Will; and this Substance, Knowledge and Will are not, as in us, three different faculties of our one person, but three distinct Personalities of one and the same Substance, that is, three ways or modes in which the One God subsists.

God the Father has been Father from all eternity. He never began to be Father, eternally originating the other two Persons, so that neither of them ever began to be.

So God the Son is the eternal Son, and God the Holy Ghost the eternal Spirit, and the Three Divine Persons are thus co-equal and co-eternal.

The Son is called "Son" and "begotten," to express that He is the same in Substance with His Father; the earthly relation of Father and Son are visible types of Fatherhood and Sonship in God.

The Son of God is "God of God, of one Substance with the Father, by whom all things were made." He is therefore not one of the things that were made. He is uncreated but eternally begotten by His Father of His own Substance; not another God, another Supreme Being, for that would be impossible, but, as it were, another self, a reflection of the First Person—a Second Person. The Son, therefore, having a perfect knowledge and will as the Father has, but distinct from the Father as two human minds and wills are distinct from one another; from the mutual knowledge and love of Father, and of Son proceeds a reflection of the Two combined, which never began to be, and is also Personal, a Third Person, distinct from Each, the Spirit of Father and of Son, Their mutual love proceeding eternally from each, Their bond of union.

Thus there are Three Divine Persons Each eternally distinct from the other. Not that Father, Son and Holy Ghost are merely three names of the one God considered under different aspects or different dispensations. This was the heresy of the Sabellians, who were called Patripassionists, because their heresy made out but one Person in God under three names, and so it was really the Father who suffered on the Cross, only then He was called Son, as He was called Jesus Christ in respect of His Incarnation. These Three Divine names represent ineffable distinctions in the Godhead; not a distinction between the Three Persons, in Essence, Nature or Substance, for this would be a contradiction in terms, as if we should say that our one indivisible soul was divided, but a distinction of Person from Person.

—*W. Lockhart.*

There are Three Who give testimony in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. And these Three are One.—And we may be in His True Son. This is the true God and Life Eternal.

—I. *John* V, 7, 20.

Going therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
—*Matt.* XXVIII, 19.

Seated on the sea shore, St. Augustine was preparing a homily for the people on the Blessed Trinity, and was trying if by any explanations or sensible images he could make it clearer to them, when, looking up, he saw a child who had dug a hole in the sand, into which he was ladling the sea water. On being asked by the Saint what he was about, he answered: "Don't you see I am going to empty the sea into this little hole." Ah, thought the holy Doctor, it is as easy for you to do that as for me to explain the mystery of the Holy Trinity; that small hole in the sand can as easily contain all the water of the ocean as the mind of man can comprehend the mystery of the Nature of God.

It is impossible to know this secret; the mind fails, the voice is silent, and not my voice only, but the voice of angels. It is above the Powers, it is above the Cherubim and Seraphim, it passeth all created understanding.—*W. Lockhart.*

The Word is *consubstantial* with the Father. It means, that there is but ONE Divine Nature, and that this one single Divine Nature is equally possessed of by Father, Son and Holy Ghost; not divided or shared out among the Three, but wholly and entirely possessed by each one; so that the Father is all that is God; the Son is all that is God, and the Holy Ghost is all that is God. That Divine Nature, that Godhead, then, which Jesus Christ Our Lord has, is the very same identical and single Divine Nature or Godhead as that of the Father. In other words, there is one God, and the Father is that God; the Son also is that God, and the Holy Ghost is that God. Three Persons, but one God.—*H. G. Hughes.*

THE MEANING OF "PERSON"

A very common error entertained by many Protestants and by most rationalists about the Catholic idea of God, is their assertion that we worship a personal God, meaning thereby, a corporeal being like ourselves, a sublimated man, as it were; and they conclude that our religion can not possibly be spiritual, since it has such a foundation. This error is due to their ignorance of the meaning attached to the word "person." By a person we mean a being who is responsible for his acts; one to whom an act may be imputed as to a responsible agent. The lower animals, for instance, are not held morally responsible for their actions, since they lack the source of responsibility—reason, and so are not spoken of as persons. Now a person, or responsible being, is not necessarily material or corporeal, and when we speak of a personal God we mean a pure spirit to whom the various acts of Deity, such as creation, redemption, and sanctification, may be imputed as to a responsible being. Our God is, indeed, a Person, but none the less is He a pure spirit, and, in the words of the Apostle, "Those who adore Him should adore Him in spirit and in truth."—*F. Harvey.*

"NATURE" AND "PERSON"

Let us see if we can grasp a little of the meaning of these words. As I look about me in this church to-day, I see a number of human beings. All of you have something in common, something that is a distinguishing mark, that separates you from all other creatures, from the angels in heaven and from other species or kinds of beings upon earth; a something that makes you to be what you are, namely, human beings. This something we call human nature.

I can see further that this human nature is complete in each individual. Thus you do not attribute your actions to another, or to the race in general, but you attribute them to yourself. You say of these acts, whether you performed them to-day or ten or twenty or more years ago, "I did them." You feel and realize that they belong to you individually. Now this condition in which a being is responsible for his acts, whether they be moral, or physical or intellectual, is called personality. In the human being, nature and personality are one.—*Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

ADORING THE BLESSED TRINITY

If we can not comprehend the deep mystery of the Holy Trinity, we may at least offer it our homage and adoration. St. Thomas Aquinas tells us, "It is impossible to come to a knowledge of the Trinity by natural reason," but we may say in the love of our hearts with the Church, "Our hope, our salvation, our honour, O Blessed Trinity" *(Ant. II. Noct. off. Trinit.)*. What prevents us from loving, honouring, and adoring one God in three Divine Persons? Because we can not drink all the water of the well, may we not partake of as much as is needful for us?

IMAGES OF THE BLESSED TRINITY

When St. Patrick was teaching the Irish people the truths of our holy Faith, he saw that they were unwilling to believe the mystery of the Holy Trinity, because they could not understand how there could be three Persons in one God, that each Person is God, and that there are not three Gods, but only one God. Bowing down, he plucked a leaf of shamrock which grew at his feet, and holding it that they might all be able to see it, said: "Behold this little plant which bears on one stalk three small leaves; they are distinct from each other, but are exactly alike, and form but one leaf, and rest on one stalk. So it is, my brethren, with the great God I preach to you. He is one in Nature, and three in Person." The people immediately believed, and on that day many thousands embraced the Faith.

Matter exists, but not always in the same state. It may exist in the *solid* state, or in the *liquid* state, or in the state of gas or *vapor*. How many states are there? Three. Yet these three include all. A fourth state can not be so much as imagined.

Every creature in either wholly *spiritual,* as are the angels and archangels; or else wholly *material,* as the metals, the rocks, the seas and the mountains, or else *partly spiritual and partly material,* as

man, who unites the two in a single personality, his soul being spiritual, and his body material.

Every conceivable line must have a *beginning,* or a point at which it starts; an *end,* or the point at which it terminates, and the *distance between.* Try and imagine any single straight line that is not made up of these three parts. Impossible! You can not.

Material substances are composed, so far as their external form and shape are concerned, of *lines,* of *surfaces* and of *solids.*

There is *vegetable* life, enjoyed by all kinds of trees, shrubs and plants; then there is *sensitive* or purely animal life, possessed by all kinds of birds, beasts, fish, reptiles, etc., and lastly, there is *rational* life, special prerogative for men of all races and languages and colours. The one idea "life" is present in all; yet it exhibits itself in three several ways. No one can discover a fourth kind of organic life. There are just three: no more and no less.

Now let us consider an individual human soul, over whose destinies this same mysterious trinity holds sway. The soul enters the earth possessing only its *natural* life: then the waters of Holy Baptism flow over it, and, at once, it is lifted up above nature and begins to live the life of *supernatural grace;* which is totally different from the life of mere nature. If it perseveres it dies at last to the world, but only to enter upon a new and still sublimer life, viz., the life of *eternal glory* in heaven. Now observe: it is one and the same soul.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

In the sun we find very distinctly three things: the *natural light* which makes up its nature; the *rays of light* with which it illumines heaven and earth; the *heat* whereby it produces wonderful operations upon earth. So there are three in the Godhead: the Father, who is the sun in its nature; the Son, who is the rays of light of the world and proceeds from the Father; and the Holy Ghost, who is that fire of love and proceeds from the Father and the Son. In the same way that the sun does not proceed from any other sun, so does the Father proceed from none other; and as the rays of light are from the sun, so also is the Son from the Father; and as heat proceeds from the sun and from the rays of light, so does the Holy Ghost proceed from the Father and from the Son. But as the light, the rays and the heat together are only one sun, so also the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are only one God.

—*St. Cyril of Alexandria.*

JESUS CHRIST

THE REDEEMER

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.—The same was in the beginning with God.—All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made.—John I, 1-3.

It is impossible, for man's finite mind to grasp any positive idea of God by the light of reason alone. Man of himself, even aided by

grace, cannot know God, or love God, or worship God as He deserves. For to know God as He is, we must be made sharers in an infinite knowledge; to love God as He deserves, we must share in a power of loving which is infinite; to worship God according to what He deserves from His creatures, that worship must be infinite. Only God can know God and love God, and worship God as He deserves. Nor can we worship rightly without proportionate knowledge. But worship is the homage of a creature; yet to be worthy of God it must be the worship of a God. If then God willed to be worshipped "in spirit and in truth," that is, by the worship of intelligences and in a way proportionate to His dignity, a mode must be found by which God should become a creature, in order that there might be a creature who was God.

Since the Incarnation has taken place, we know that the purpose of the Incarnation was in the mind of God from all eternity, and that we, too, were included in the eternal thought of God, and were begotten (not in reality but in purpose), and "predestinated together with Christ before all ages," "Who is thus the First-born of many brethren."

But while this mighty Being tarried for the fulness of time, which God's infinite wisdom and goodness had determined on for all eternity, man was created and was lost. Yet the remedy was prepared, and now for the first time the mystery which had been hidden from the angels, was revealed to man, in the instant when he knew that he had lost everything by sin; and so the Incarnate God Who was to come, was revealed as the Redeemer of our lost race, "the Lamb of God, foreknown indeed before the foundations of the world, but manifested in the last times for us." At length in the fulness of time, after centuries of type, figure, and prophecy, there appeared on earth, in the land of Judaea, near upon twenty centuries ago, this most wonderful of beings, the most wonderful Man of all human history: Jesus Christ.—*W. Lockhart.*

HIS DIVINITY

But first let me say that, in order to make an act of faith in the Divinity of Jesus Christ, there must be a double action of God. The *external* evidence, through the bodily senses, of the miraculous facts, from which we infer that none but God could be the Operator, and the *internal* revelation, the direct action of God the Revealer, which draws aside the veil from the mind and heart of man, which shows man to himself, and enlightens his mind to see God by the intuition of faith.. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but My Father who is in heaven."—*W. Lockhart.*

Jesus being baptized, forthwith came out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him. And behold a Voice from Heaven, saying: This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.
—*Matt.* III, 16, 17.

Peter said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.
—*Matt* XVI, 16.

There is One God, and One Mediator of God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.—I. *Tim.* II, 5.

ATTACKS ON HIS DIVINITY

We often ask ourselves how men . . . can possibly fail to understand how they destroy Jesus when they suspect His sincerity, representing Him as a visionary, the victim of the most monstrous illusions. How can these critics not see that the more they exalt the man in Jesus Christ, the more they strengthen the testimony He gave of Himself touching His celestial origin, His Divine sonship?

—*Père Rose, O. P.*

HISTORIC PROOF OF HIS LIFE

The real existence of Jesus Christ is as certain as the other great facts of history, about which no one ventures to doubt. The Jewish historian Josephus, who wrote a short time after Christ's death, mentions Him as the Founder of Christianity; and the Emperor Julian, who endeavoured to destroy the Christian Faith and restore Paganism does not attempt to deny the same fact; whilst Rousseau sums up the evidence in favour of His existence in this remarkable confession: "The facts of the life of Socrates, of which no one doubts, are less attested than those of Jesus Christ."—*W. Lockhart.*

THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS

Jesus Christ stripped Himself of His bliss, which was infinite, in order to make us partakers of it, and to associate us as His companions in it, taking for Himself our miseries and burdening Himself with them to remove them from our shoulders.—*St. Ignatius.*

JESUS HIDING HIS GLORY UNDER THE VEIL OF A HUMAN BODY

When Moses came down from the mountain, after conversing forty days and forty nights with God, his face shone with such brilliancy that the people feared to approach and converse with him. He found it necessary to hide his face with a veil. Blessed Lord, Thou hast hidden the glory of Thy divinity under the veil with which Thy Blessed Mother hath clothed Thee, in order that we may approach and gaze upon Thy adorable face and press Thee to our hearts. We thank Thee, O Lord, for thus humbling Thyself, and coming amongst us, and we beseech Thee to grant that one day we may behold Thy face in its unveiled glory in Heaven.

—*C. H. McKenna, O. P.*

THE HUMAN SOUL OF JESUS

Our Lord and Saviour, though He was God, was also perfect man; and hence He had not only a body, but a soul likewise, such as ours, though pure from all stain of evil. He did not take a body without a soul, God forbid! for that would not have been to become man. How would He have sanctified our nature by taking a nature which was not ours? Man without a soul is on a level with the beasts of the field; but our Lord came to save a race capable of praising and obeying Him, possessed of immortality, though that immortality had lost its promised blessedness. Man was created in

the image of God, and that image is in his soul; when then his Maker, by an unspeakable condescension, came in his nature, He took on Himself a soul in order to take on Him a body; He took on Him a soul as the means of His union with a body; He took on Him in the first place the soul, then the body of man, both at once, but in this order, the soul and the body; He Himself created the soul which He took on Himself, while He took His body from the flesh of the Blessed Virgin, His Mother. Thus He became perfect man with body and soul; and as He took on Him a body of flesh and nerves, which admitted of wounds and death, and was capable of suffering, so did He take a soul too, which was susceptible of that suffering, and moreover was susceptible of the pain and sorrow which are proper to a human soul; and, as his atoning passion was undergone in the body, so it was undergone in the soul also.

—*Cardinal Newman.*

HUMAN NATURE SANCTIFIED BY THE INCARNATION

God stretched out His hand and touched human nature in the Incarnation and restored to the Temple those lepers cast out from the camp of God's people, so that they might offer their bodies a living victim to Him of whom it is said: "Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech."—*Venerable Bede.*

The desired of all Nations shall come.—Agg. II, 8.

Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the Just: let the earth be opened, and bud forth a Saviour: and let Justice spring up together: I, the Lord, have created Him.

—*Is.* XLV, 8.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Christ was not born according to the common course of Nature. As the conception itself utterly transcends the order of Nature, so also in the birth we can contemplate nothing but what is Divine. Besides, a circumstance wonderful beyond expression or conception, He is born of His mother without any diminution of her maternal virginity; and as He afterwards went forth from the sepulchre whilst closed and sealed, and entered the room in which His disciples were assembled, "the doors being shut" (John xx, 19); as the rays of the sun penetrate without breaking or injuring in the least the solid substance of glass; after a similar, but more exalted manner, did Jesus Christ come forth from His mother's womb, without any injury to her maternal virginity, which, immaculate and perpetual, we celebrate with most just praises. This was the work of the Holy Ghost, who, in the conception and birth of the Son, so favoured the mother as to have imparted to her fecundity, and preserved her perpetual virginity.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

And the Word was made flesh.—John I, 14.

This day is born to you a Saviour Who is Christ the Lord.

—*Luke* II, 11.

FORMED OF VIRGIN EARTH LIKE ADAM

As the first Adam was made of the earth before it was cursed, so the second Adam was formed of Virgin earth which was never cursed.—*St. Andrew.*

THE INCARNATE EVIDENCE OF GOD'S LOVE

That God should redeem man at all, that He should make atonement for the sins of mankind, is an evidence of infinite mercy. But that God should have chosen this special way, the Incarnation of His Divine Son, is an evidence of His stupendous love for the creature of His hand. It is the answer of Heaven to the cravings, the longings of man, an answer to be conceived only in the Divine Mind. Religion, in its very essence, implies a loving creature and a loving God; and the history of man's spiritual life has been a series of cravings and a series of answers.—*Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

THE FATHER AND THE HOLY GHOST NOT MAN

Jesus Christ is truly man; but He is also truly God. Then, are God the Father and God the Holy Ghost also man? No. By no means. But why not? For the simple reason that it was not the *Nature* of God that became man, that Nature which is common to all three; but it was the *Person* of God the Son, that Person who is not common to the three, but is distinct and undivided.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

THE INCARNATION THE CAUSE OF THE REVOLT OF THE ANGELS

It is said that when the angels heard it proclaimed that the Son of God was to be born in the flesh, to unite in His person the human and Divine natures, some of them grew jealous of the dignity thus conferred on men; they revolted and were cast down into hell. Hitherto, the Second Divine Person had been Emmanuel to the spirits, God with them; henceforth, He should be also Emmanuel to men, God with us. For with our nature He took upon Himself our sins; and, removing our sins, He removed the only obstacle that kept us apart from God, He united us to God; God in Christ became God with us, became truly in nature our Emmanuel.

—*John H. Stapleton.*

THE INCARNATION PROCLAIMING PEACE

At Christ's birth, in the obscure village of Bethlehem, the angelic hosts, in accents of joy, proclaimed to the world that gladsome peace which He was about to establish between God and men. "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will" (Luke ii, 14). That peace, which restores men to the right of citizenship in Heaven, He valued more than His life. For in the beautiful and expressive words of St. Paul "He made peace through the blood of His Cross" (Col. i, 20). Hence His first words of greeting to His beloved disciples on that eventful day of His Resurrection, when His glorified form appeared to them within the closed doors, were the consoling words of that eternal peace of which He is the pledge "Peace be to you" (John xx, 19).—*J. A. M. Gillis.*

WHY JESUS CAME IN HUMILITY, POVERTY, AND SUFFERING

Coming to redeem our sinful race, and to enlighten a world "seated in darkness and in the shadow of death," as St. John described it, He began His work of reformation by preaching His first sermon from the pulpit of the manger. It was pride and sensuality that caused the fall of our race; and pride and avarice and sensuality were the great evils of His day, as they are also of the days in which we live. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, gives us a sad picture of the degraded condition to which pagan Rome had brought itself through these three vices. What was true of pagan Rome was true of other ancient cities of the world; it is true of our cities to-day—pride, avarice, and sensuality are the ruling gods of our age. It is for this reason Our Lord came in humility, in poverty, and in suffering, to condemn the vices that lead most men to their eternal ruin.—*C. H. McKenna, O. P.*

THE MEANING OF THE INCARNATION

Literally, incarnation means the taking on of flesh. Applied to the Son of God, it is that act by which the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity came upon earth and took to Himself a human nature such as that which we possess. This does not mean that human nature became Divine nature, for this would be a contradiction in terms. It means that the Divine Person, in whom the Divine nature is complete, united to the Divine nature in that one person the nature of man, so that we have the mystery of the two natures, that of God and that of man, existing in the one Person who is Divine.

—*Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

THE JOY OF THE NATIVITY

Let us, while walking by faith, in exile from Him, hungering and thirsting for justice, and longing with unspeakable ardour for the beauty of His form as God, devoutly celebrate His natal day in the form of a Servant. Not yet can we contemplate Him begotten of the Father before the day-star; let us hasten to Him in the night hour born of the Virgin. Not yet do we comprehend how His Name continueth before the sun; let us recognize how in the sun He hath set His tabernacle. Not yet do we see the Only One abiding in His Father; let us recall the Bridegroom coming out of his bridechamber. Not yet are we fit for the Banquet of our Father; let us know the Manger of our Lord Jesus Christ.—*St. Augustine.*

I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me.—John XIV, 6.

THE SACRED PASSION

And what was the meaning of this life of unsurpassed sorrow and pain, humiliation, and seeming defeat? *Love*, was the reason. Jesus Christ our Lord lived and died simply for love of each one of us. He, the Good Shepherd, lays down His life for us who are His sheep, that He may save us from the power of the devil, from sin, and from eternal death; he, the loving Master, teaches us the truth of God to which He bore witness every moment of His earthly life, that we may be truly free; He, the righteous Judge, offers us, as

our reward, the gift of faith that we may inherit the joys of Heaven that never fade. Love is poured out upon the earth by One who manifested perfectly the love of God which passeth understanding. And all this is done, these manifold gifts of grace, truth, and life, are given to us of the sole bounty and goodness of God. Of ourselves we are thankless, selfish, heartless, God-forgetting. The Jews, who had experienced so many favours throughout the course of their long history, crucified the Messiah; and we, who call ourselves by the sacred Name of Christ, have little love in our hearts for Jesus; are ready, time after time, to sacrifice Him on the altar of our selfish advancement, or to crucify Him on the cross of an angry passion gratified, a revenge accomplished, an enmity embittered.

—*W. R. Carson.*

As the celebration of the Coenaculum has become perpetual and universal, thus the battles of Gethsemani and Calvary are for all times and for all nations.—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

Surely He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows: and we have thought Him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted.—But He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed.—Is. LIII, 4-5.

He was offered because it was His own will, and He opened not His mouth; He shall be led as a Sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a Lamb before His shearer, and He shall not open His mouth.—Is. LIII, 7.

THE DISTRESS OF HIS SOUL

This being the case, you will see at once, that it is nothing to the purpose to say that He would be supported under His trial by the consciousness of innocence and the anticipation of triumph; for His trial consisted in the withdrawal, as of other causes of consolation, so of that very consciousness and anticipation. The same act of the will which admitted the influence upon His soul of any distress at all, admitted all distresses at once. It was not the contest between antagonist impulses and views, coming from without, but the operation of an inward resolution. As men of self-command can turn from one thought to another at their will, so much more did He deliberately deny Himself the comfort, and satiate Himself with the woe. In that moment His soul thought not of the future, He thought only of the present burden which was upon Him, and which He had come upon earth to sustain.—*Cardinal Newman.*

We have seen Him despised and the most abject of men, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with infirmity; and His look was as it were hidden.—Is. LIII, 3.

The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.—Matt. VIII, 20.

CHRIST ON THE CROSS

"Gaze on Me, O My children, if you will, for I am helpless; gaze on your Maker, whether in contempt, or in faith and love. Here I wait, upon the Cross, the appointed time, the time of grace and mercy; here I wait till the end of the world, silent and motionless, for the conversion of the sinful and the consolation of the just; here I remain in weakness and shame, though I am so great in Heaven, till the end, patiently expecting My full catalogue of souls, who, when the time is at length over, shall be the reward of My passion and the triumph of My grace to all eternity."—*Cardinal Newman.*

THE CROSS

The cross, in the Roman world, was made of two coarse, rough pieces of wood, put together in the simplest fashion, to form a gibbet that should serve its purpose the more fully in proportion as it would aggravate the suffering and contribute to the degradation of the wretched man condemned to die on it. With us half of the punishment involved in death by hanging is the dreadful shame associated with death upon the gallows. But the shame of the gallows is slight compared to the ignominy attached in ancient days to crucifixion. The cross expressed the fullest possible measure of contempt, loathing, scorn; it was the greatest indignity that could be cast upon the vilest of human beings. No free citizen, however wicked, could lawfully be crucified. It was the death reserved for the depised slave and the hated outlaw, who were regarded not as men, but as the vilest of beasts. Raised high toward heaven, its arms stretching out toward both ends of the earth, the Cross of Jesus Christ proclaims to men that God's love has conquered the malice and wickedness of sinners; that mercy has overcome justice; for it announces that, notwithstanding our sins, God hath so loved the world that, for our sakes, He sent on earth His Divine Son to humble Himself for us unto death, even unto the death of the Cross. The Cross extends its arms to welcome all, to save all, to proclaim that all are welcomed as the ransomed children of the spiritual kingdom over which reigns the immortal King of ages, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.—*James J. Fox.*

THE SACRED PASSION TEACHING FORGIVENESS

A valiant knight was once grievously insulted, and in his anger he swore to be revenged. Very early one morning he set out to punish his enemy with the sword. Now there was a chapel by the wayside, into which he entered, and glanced at the pictures upon the walls. There were three pictures. The first represented our Lord in His garments of mockery, and beneath was inscribed: "He reviled not, though He was reviled." The second one depicted the scourging with the words: "He threatened not, although He suffered." The third finally was the crucifixion, with these words beneath: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." The sight of these three pictures of the Passion touched the knight's heart. He knelt down and prayed, and his desire for vengeance melted away before the rays of the heavenly love of Jesus, like ice before the sun's rays.—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

THE RESURRECTION: ITS EVIDENCE

If there be one fact in history, which is better entitled to credit than any other, I do not hesitate to say that that fact is the glorious resurrection of Jesus from the tomb. Never, no, never, within the memory of man, was any transaction transmitted through every successive generation, from the period of its occurrence to the present day, amidst such a blaze of evidence. It is attested by the positive and unexceptionable testimony of persons of the highest integrity, who were themselves eye-witnesses of it, who saw Jesus dead, and who afterward beheld Him alive; who beheld Him not once or twice only, but frequently; not transiently but for a considerable time; who not only beheld Him but who heard Him, conversed with Him, touched Him, ate and drank with Him, and had every imaginable certainty, both of the reality and identity of His person which it was possible for the evidence of the senses to convey, and who proved, moreover, their honesty and sincerity by that best of arguments, the shedding of their blood.—*Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

This Jesus hath God raised again, whereof all we are witnesses.—Being exalted therefore by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath poured forth this which you see and hear.—Acts II, 32, 33.

As Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.—Matt. XII, 40.

Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up.—But he spoke of the Temple of His Body.—John II, 19, 21.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION

What a wonderful change was wrought at once in the Apostles' minds by the knowledge of the Resurrection! What a revulsion from doubt to certainty, sorrow to triumph, despair to faith and confidence! It was a change for them as from darkness to sunshine, even as from death to life. The world had seemed to be shattered, and an abyss opened beneath their feet when all their beliefs and hopes, all thoughts and certainties, collapsed at once at the death of their beloved Master. Now it was as if the solid world had been created anew. After all, they were not deceived, Jesus was still a reality, His words were true; a great future was still open before Him and them. What did the scandal of the Cross matter now, or weakness, or obscurities, or the triumph of His foes, since Jesus was really risen?—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE ASCENSION: ITS ADVANTAGES FOR US

In the first place, the merit of our faith was greatly augmented; because faith has for its object those things that fall not under the senses, and are remote from the reason and intelligence of men. Wherefore, if the Lord had not departed from us, the merit of our faith would be diminished; for Christ the Lord has declared them "blessed" that have not "seen, and have believed" (John xx, 29).

Besides, the ascension of Christ into heaven has great weight to confirm in our hearts hope; since, believing that Christ, as man, ascended into heaven, and placed human nature at the right hand of God the Father, we are in great hope that we, His members, shall also ascend thither, and be there united with our Head, according to this testimony of our Lord Himself: "Father I will, that where I am, they also, whom Thou hast given me, may be with me" (John xvii, 24). In the next place, we have attained this most specially important advantage, that it has rapt our love to Heaven, and inflamed it with the Divine Spirit; for, most truly has it been said, that where our treasure is, there also is our heart (Matt. vi, 21).

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

The Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God.—Mark XVI, 19.

"SITTETH AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER"

In these words we observe a trope, that is, the changing of a word from its literal to a figurative meaning, a thing frequent in the Sacred Scriptures, when, accommodating the matter to our understanding, we attribute human affections and members to God, in whom, spirit that He is, nothing corporeal can be conceived. But, as, in human things, we consider Him who is placed at the right hand to occupy the more honourable place, transferring the same idea to celestial things also, in order to express the glory which Christ, as man, has obtained before all others, we confess that He is at the right hand of the Father. Here, however, "to sit" does not imply position and figure of body but declares the fixed and permanent possession of even royal and supreme power and glory which He has received from the Father; of which the Apostle says: "Raising Him up from the dead, and setting Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, above all principality, and power, and virtue, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and He hath put all things under His feet" (Eph. i, 20, *sqq.*); words which manifestly imply that this glory belongs to our Lord in a manner so special and exclusive, as not possibly to suit any other created nature; whence, in another place, the Apostle testifies: "To which of the angels said He at any time: Sit on My right hand?"

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST

The spirit of Christ and the spirit of the world are so opposed that each is "death" as regards the other. Their aims are different: one pointing to a future life as the supreme object to which all else must be subordinate, while the other denies that there is any reality beyond this life. To the one, all this present existence, with works and duties belonging to the family or the state, with pleasures and possessions, is but a means or instrument for some further end; and at the same time it may be an impediment and a danger. These things, then, require to be pursued with caution, without exclusive attachment, and with much restraint. The carnal spirit considers temporal things as the sole object of existence; and all other considerations such as moral or spiritual laws must be subordinated to

that great object. The spirit of Christ says that self-sacrifice for the sake of God and man is necessary to the perfect life and future happiness. The spirit of the world says, "Seek first your own good; let all interests be sacrificed to your own." The world says, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Christ says, "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth." The qualities which the world admires, practices, and inculcates upon the rising generations, are pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth. The qualities most cordially detested are the great virtues of the Gospel, humility, liberality, chastity, meekness, temperance, brotherly love, diligence.—*Bishop Bellord.*

My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, that I may perfect His work.—John IV, 34.

Whereas indeed He was the Son of God, He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.—Heb. V, 8.

JESUS NEVER DEFENDED HIMSELF

Thus Jesus spoke to guide the multitudes and to defend the simple people; but He never spoke to defend himself against the many unjust, malicious attacks made upon His sinless character and His holy work. Jesus is great and majestic in His Silence.

—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

THE DISCIPLE OF THE SUFFERER MUST BE A SUFFERER HIMSELF

He whose life was a life of sorrow, who was born in poverty, who was, even in infancy, forced to fly from those who would put him to death, who was ever offered insults and injuries, who was scourged and mocked and crowned with thorns, who was spat upon and treated with every indignity, who was finally compelled to suffer the ignominy and the torture of crucifixion, who was, throughout all His days, the Man of Sorrows, will naturally number among His followers not those whose object in life is to seek out pleasure and ease and comfort and sensual gratification of every kind, but rather those whose lives are resplendent with humility and denial, with sacrifice and suffering, with grief and affliction. "Whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after me can not be my disciple." The child is molded after the character of its parent: the pupil drinks in the wisdom of the teacher: the soldier derives renewed courage from the bravery of his leader: the friend is formed in the likeness of his friend, and so the disciple of the Sufferer must be a sufferer himself.

—*Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

THE MERCY OF CHRIST

What are the offenses which men judge most harshly and forgive least willingly? In men, disloyality; in women, unchastity. Our Lord Jesus Christ was the model of true and loyal friendship; He was the very perfection of piety, and yet He showed himself generous in forgiving offenses against these virtues.

There was an Apostle whom He had signally honoured with His confidence. He had announced him as the future head of His Church. He had confided to him the leadership in the great work of carrying

on His mission. And yet in the time of His greatest trial, when He most needed a friend, that Apostle abjured Him. He had sworn but a few hours before to be faithful unto death, even though all others should fail. The sense of trial came and found him a deserter, coward and traitor. His only punishment was a look, a look of reproach no doubt, but back of the reproach was a great and Divine pity for his weakness and self-degradation. That look drove him forth into the night, but not into the night of despair. It loosed the fount of his tears, and with repentance came hope and new manhood. When Christ met him after his resurrection, He spoke to him no direct word of blame. St. Peter felt the gentle reproach in the thrice-repeated question, "Simon son of John, lovest thou me?" but on his humble renewal of his loyalty, the gracious Lord rewarded him by once more committing to him the lambs and the sheep for whose salvation He had offered His own life. Could anything be more trustful, more winning, more benign?

Let us now consider one other example of Christ's generosity in pardoning. One day, St. John tells us, the Scribes and Pharisees brought to Him in the Temple courtyard a woman taken in adultery. They quoted to Him the law of Moses which decreed that such a one should be stoned. To their query He answered nothing, but stooping over, He wrote with His finger on the ground. Then He said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." And again stooping down, He wrote on the ground. The sacred narrative does not tell us what He wrote, but it is believed that His finger traced a list of the secret sins of the accusers. The eldest among these glanced at the writing in the dust, then drew his hood closer round his reddening face and silently slipped away. Another and another read the brief record of his own shame, and vanished from sight, until finally Jesus alone remained with the woman, to whose eyes terror and wonder struggled with dawning hope. "Woman," He said, "where are they that accuse thee? Hath no man condemned thee?" She murmured gratefully, "No man, Lord." Then said He, "Neither will I condemn thee. Go and now sin no more."—*Francis P. Duffy.*

CHRIST'S EXAMPLE OF FORGIVENESS

In the life of Christ we find that He liked His omnipotent hand almost daily to bless and to heal; that He spoke often to console, to bring comfort and to call the dead to life, but we never find Him using His power Divine to humiliate or to frustrate an enemy.

—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself.—I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

—*John* XII. 32, 47.

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.—*Luke* XIX. 10.

THE TEARS OF JESUS

Tears, they say, have a great power over the human heart. What

prayers and threats cannot accomplish, tears will achieve. The menaces of the Almighty, the inspirations of grace have not converted our hearts. Will the tears of Jesus also fail to soften them? Can we look up to the tear-stained, sorrowful Face of the Saviour and yet continue in our dissolute ways! The tears of a mother have reclaimed many a prodigal son from a career of debauch and self-indulgence. Are the tears of Jesus less powerful?

—*Charles Bruehl.*

THE PATIENCE OF CHRIST

We know, as a matter of fact, that three long years of constant schooling, of intimate conversation and friendship, had left these men as ignorant, as gross and untaught, as on the day when they abandoned their nets on the bank of the sea of Galilee to follow the Master. Neither teachings, nor reproaches, nor repeated miracles, had been of avail to bring them to a reasonable stand in their attitude towards Him. He had foretold to them His death, His resurrection and the accompanying prodigies. The angel at the tomb, the disciples of Emmaus, the holy women, had confirmed His prophetic word. Yet naught of all this stirred them, nothing convinced them; they seemed rather the more firmly grounded in their indecision and unbelief. Thomas refuses outright to believe. Magdalen with touching piety but wavering reliance in Christ's word prepares to embalm His Body with precious ointments. The disciples first receive the accounts of the holy women as a nightmare, an hallucination, a phantasy born of weak nerves and a sick brain. Confronted themselves with the glorified Body of Him whom they had seen slain, they imagine they behold a phantom, a ghost! What could equal this depth of obstinate and blind perverseness—what, but the compassionate goodness and condescending pity of the Saviour, whose patience seems to surpass all limit! For would it not be unqualifiedly unreasonable to require of the Almighty that He measure the evidence of His works with the exigencies of an understanding dulled by obstinate pride or beclouded by carnal interests?

Yet He did it. The importance of the truth itself of the Resurrection—the keystone of the whole edifice of religion He had come upon earth to raise; the need He had, for His glory, of the men He had formed with such jealous care; His affection for His Church, for His disciples, for us, for the hard of belief of all ages—forced Him to it.—*John H. Stapleton.*

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

The East, we are told, never changes, and what we see there to-day we may be almost certain the eyes of our Saviour rested on. We have the following description, from the pen of one who lived in Palestine for thirty years, of what can be witnessed there in this matter almost at any moment. "Our Saviour says (such are His words) that the good shepherd, when he putteth forth his own sheep, goeth before them, and they follow. This is true to the letter. They are so tame and so trained that they follow their keeper with the utmost docility. He leads them forth from the fold or from the houses in the villages just where he pleases. As there are many flocks in such a place as this, each one takes a different path, and

it is his business to find pasture for them." The traveler then tells us that the shepherd teaches his sheep to follow him; that as they go on their way to the destination he has in view, he stops, turns, and calls to them, to remind them of his presence; that, when he calls, they hasten their steps and follow on; and that, should another call them, they halt, remain motionless, and, should that other be a perfect stranger, they turn and flee, because his voice is unknown to them. This experiment, the writer proceeds to inform us, he has himself often made. He speaks of the dangers run by the shepherds for their sheep. "I have listened with intense interest to their graphic description of downright and desperate fights with savage beasts." The wolf, the panther, the leopard come; the thief and the robber do their worst; and the shepherd has to submit to blows and wounds, and sometimes to death. "A poor faithful fellow," he goes on to narrate, "last spring, between Tiberias and Tabor, instead of fleeing, actually fought three Bedouin robbers until he was hacked to pieces, and died among the sheep he was defending." The sheep, we are reminded in this account, keep near to their shepherd. Some nearer than the rest are specially beloved; some stay farther away, but are careful not to go outside the range of his voice; and a few, now and again, wander and are lost. "I have repeatedly seen the silly goat or sheep running hither and thither and bleating piteously after the lost flock, only to call forth from their dens the beasts of prey, or to bring up the lurking thief who quickly quiets its cries in death."

—John Freeland.

I am the Door. By Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved: and he shall go in and go out, and shall find pastures.—I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd giveth His life for His sheep.—I am the Good Shepherd: I know Mine, and Mine know Me.

—John X, 9, 11, 14.

THE HUMILITY OF CHRIST

There can be no doubt that our Lord could, if He had chosen, have made Himself exceedingly popular. He could have engineered a great social movement, or a political revolution, merely by force of that nameless attractiveness which led the crowd to listen to Him and follow Him. But at the critical moment He invariably refused or repelled the popular homage. When the multitude wanted to "make Him a king," a champion, probably, of the downtrodden poorer classes, He hid Himself. When a great following was attaching itself to Him as a benevolent wonder-worker, from whom a constant supply of the necessaries of life might be expected, He horrified His hearers by His unexplained reference to the great and august mystery in which His own Body was to be the food of His adherents, so that most of His followers turned back and walked with Him no more. So also, at the end of His career on earth, there came a final scene of enthusiasm, which He might, if He had chosen, have made use of to overwhelm the scheme of the Jewish authorities for His destruction, and to obtain for Himself a portion of natural authority and influence. The chief priests and Pharisees felt the menace of this popular outburst and their own powerlessness against it. "Do you see that we prevail nothing? Behold, the whole

world is gone after Him." But they need not have been afraid; our Lord was constant to His principle of independence, and would not use His opportunity. Now, as always, He accepted the popular acclamation as some small part of His due, but He gave it no positive encouragement, and made no use of it whatever: He merely let it die out, for want of anything to feed upon. He would not fan the flame by a harangue, or feed it with a party cry; He led the shouting crowds nowhere and proposed no enterprise to them. If they liked to follow and acclaim Him as King and Messias, well and good; He was all that they thought Him, and more. But He would offer them nothing beyond His own personality—no gifts, no schemes of political reform, no incitement to revolutionary enterprise. "He entered into the Temple and viewed all things round about." That was all—a tame ending, indeed, to a day of so much enthusiasm. So there was nothing more to be done or seen, or said; the crowd had nothing to do but to disperse, and Jesus "went out to Bethania with the twelve." No hosannas, no waving palm branches, no carpet of foliage and the garments of passionate adherents, no splendour of sunshine to supply the lack of royal magnificence; but the cold evening wind and the silence of coming night; withered leaves by the rugged wayside, and thirteen tired figures slowly climbing in the gathering darkness.—*A. B. Sharpe.*

HOW WE RECEIVE CHRIST

We may also reflect that all do not receive and possess Jesus in the same way. Some, like the Bethlehemite, refuse Him a shelter, and these are bad Christians; others receive Him coldly and indifferently, and these are lukewarm Christians; others again, like the shepherds, come with faith to adore their Lord at the manger, and afterward return to their usual occupations, but continue to return again and again to the service of their Saviour, these are fervent Christians; finally, others, like Mary and Joseph, always remain with and possess Jesus, and these are the perfect Christians, who with their whole heart and with all their strength live to God and to Christ Our Lord.—*Arthur Devine, C. P.*

CHRIST ALONE MUST RULE IN THE HEART

The heart of man is naturally a pantheon. It is filled with idols and it worships them. Inordinate self-love and passionate love of creatures profane and defile it. When Christ enters the heart, He enters as a King. The heart must be His own, and in it He must rule supreme. He tolerates no false gods, no idols. They all must vanish before His face, even as the snow melts before the warm rays of the April sun.—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

JESUS REJECTED

A holy monk was going through a forest one Christmas night. He was thinking about the love of God, in sending His beloved Son Jesus to be born on that night for us. As he was passing along, he thought he heard the cries of a newly born child not far from him. He turned towards the place from whence the sound came, and behold, he saw lying on the snow a beautiful child, crying and tremb-

ling in the cold. Filled with compassion for the poor infant, he said, "My little child, how is it that you are thus left alone, lying on the cold snow? Who has had the cruelty to leave you there?" Then the little child—for it was a vision of Jesus Himself that the monk saw—answered him: "Alas! how can I help crying, when I see Myself abandoned by everyone, when I see that nobody receives Me or has pity for Me. Having said this, He disappeared. The monk then understood that this vision was given him to show him that men whom Jesus came from Heaven to save, instead of loving Him and receiving Him with joy, do not make room in their hearts for Him, but cast Him out, as the Jews did, to a poor stable, and leave Him there to cry, without giving Him even one word of pity.

—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

JESUS, A MAN OF PRAYER

Jesus, the Son of God, made flesh and dwelling among us to teach us how to live and save our souls, was a Man of prayer. He taught and illustrated every virtue, but none so frequently and emphatically as prayer. His long hidden life was a life of uninterrupted prayer. At the beginning of His public life the Holy Spirit led Him into the desert to fast and pray for forty days. When He returned He ascended the mountain, addressed His disciples, the multitudes, the whole world—and preached prayer!

—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

THE SACRED HEART

One day, as Blessed Margaret Mary was kneeling before the altar, Jesus appeared to her in a visible manner in all the splendour of His glory, His five wounds shining like five bright suns. He showed her His adorable Heart all surrounded with flames, and told her the great extent to which the excess of His love for man had carried Him. "Behold," He said, "behold this Heart which has loved men so much, and made every effort to testify that love. In return I receive from the greater number only contempt and ingratitude. It is this," He continued, "which I feel more deeply than all that I suffered in My Passion; for if they would only return My love, I would consider all that I have done for them as nothing, and, if possible, I would even wish to do more; instead of which I meet with coldness and repulses from men in My anxiety to do them good. At least, then," added He, "do thou give Me satisfaction by atoning for their ingratitude as far as thou art able."

The devotion to the Sacred Heart is with reason called a treasure of true sanctity; for it is the devotion which most pleases God and most helps souls. By it we return love for love, by it we repair the injuries of ungrateful men, by it we obtain the most precious of all graces, and we know that Our Lord prefers it, and rewards it, before all other devotions. He has asked us to honour His Divine Heart by pictures in our rooms and prayer-books, and has promised blessings wherever they shall be. Its practice is: (1) By *thanking* Him for His immense love for men, especially in the Blessed Sacrament, and therefore by *consecrating* ourselves, our prayers, works, and sufferings to Him every day. (2) By *compassion* for the ill-treatment He receives from sinners, and therefore by *acts of reparation* to His

wounded honour. (3) By *fighting self,* that we may love Him better: first, in all affection to any deliberate sin; second, all indulgence of sensuality or self-love; and third, in dissipation of mind and heart over exterior things. (4) By making others know and love this Devotion at every opportunity. Lastly, by great love of our Lady.

—*J. Dignam, S. J.*

THE HOLY NAME

The Holy Spirit saw that Name throughout the ages of man's existence, and, in all His work for the sanctification of souls, knew that it was through this Name that He could find entrance into the hearts of men. Whether before that day or since, His grace, as it is powerful in the inspirations with which He favours men; as it is manifested in the unerring guidance of the church; as it is poured forth through the Sacraments, could do its work only through the merits of Jesus, whose act of salvation was required that men might return to God.—*Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

Thou shalt call His Name Jesus. For He shall save His people from their sins.—Matt, I, 21.

He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the Cross;—For which cause God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a Name which is above all names:—That in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in Heaven, on earth, and under the earth,—And that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father.—Phil. II, 8-11.

Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved.

—*Acts* IV, 12.

Visit the bedside of the dying Saint; see him as life is ebbing away and the dawn of a truer life and love is breaking; see him fix the eyes that are being dimmed by death in a steady gaze upon the crucifix that he clasps in his hand; listen to the last word of his voice, uttered with unspeakable affection, and you will hear the sound of the name *Jesus.*

Gaze back into the past, and on some Roman holiday stand in the amphitheater of the Imperial City; behold a man, despised of men, an outcast about to meet his death; see approach the raging beasts ready to devour him; see the smile of Heaven that lights up his countenance, and hear the martyr's last word in which he finds strength and courage—*Jesus!—Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

Jesus! Speak the word, and you have made an act of faith. You have professed your belief in Him who taught men the way of salvation, who said that He was the way, the truth and the life. You have yielded the homage of your intellect to Him who had the power and the right to teach men the things of God.

Jesus! Speak the word, and you have made an act of hope. You

have brought up before your soul the vision that gives you the right to hope. Despite the fall of the human race, despite your own sins, despite the cruel persistence of the powers of evil, despite the discouragement of many temptations, and the bitter weariness of the welfare of life, despite the weakness of the flesh and the infidelity of the world, in that Name your soul is raised above the struggling, tossing strife and empowered to look into the very courts of Heaven.

Jesus! Speak the word, and you have made an act of love. Through faith and hope you are enabled to utter it with that which surpasses these—love itself. If you were to ask the rabble that surrounded the Cross upon Good Friday why that name of *Jesus* was written above the form that hung upon the wood, they would tell you that it was the name of one who had blasphemed against God. If you were to ask your own soul why this name was there inscribed, you would be compelled to answer: "It was because of my sins." But if it were given you to gaze with the spiritual eyes of faith, to read what the eyes of the executor and the sinner could not see, you would behold, burning with the light of Heaven and emblazoned in letters of gold, another word beside that sacred Name, and that word—*Love!—Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

In a New York hospital there was recently on the operating table a man who suffered of cancer of the tongue, and the only way to save his life was to remove the tongue. Surgeons and nurses were assembled and everything was ready for the operation, when the chief surgeon asked the patient if he wished to say a few words for the last time, because after the operation he would be speechless for life. The patient nodded his head, sat up and said with a loud voice: "Praised be Jesus Christ." Needless to say that all those assembled were most deeply affected by the sincere piety of the man, who devoted the last words he would ever speak to the praise of his Saviour.

Let His Name be Blessed for evermore, His Name continueth before the sun.—Ps. LXXI, 17.

THE DEVOTION TO THE HOLY NAME

St. Bernardine of Sienna was the instrument made use of by Almighty God to promote devotion in his day to the Holy Name. In order to direct the attention of the people to this devotion he had a picture painted representing the Holy Name surrounded with rays of glory, which he exposed for veneration after his missionary sermons and by this means propagated the devotion. Later on, Bernardine de Bustis composed for the Franciscan Fathers the office of the Holy Name of Jesus, which Pope Clement VII. approved. After this the office and Mass of the Holy Name became more and more extended throughout the Church, till at length Innocent XIII. instituted the feast itself and ordered it to be kept throughout the whole Church. This is in brief the history of the institution of the feast.

THE HOLY GHOST

THE HOLY GHOST

We do not know the laws by which He acts. The Spirit breatheth where He will. Only this law we know—that He is ever with us with sufficient light and strength for all our needs. He is called the finger of God's right hand. Therefore it is that He is always leading us gently and sweetly even though we be unconscious of His influence. We may seem at times to be making our own spiritual careers, and saving our souls by methods which we judge best and safest. But as we grow older we begin to realize that it is another who guides us. We had thought we were choosing Him when in reality He was choosing us. It is not necessary to have lived very long in order to look back on the past and recognize the control of the Holy Spirit. Strangely enough we see this when it is all over, and either can not, or will not, see it when it is taking place. We are like the disciples who walked with Our Lord to Emmaus. They did not realize on the way to whom they were talking. But when, at supper, He made Himself known, then they remembered how their hearts had burned within them.—*Thomas F. Gerrard.*

Whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.—For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry, Abba (Father).—For the Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God.—Rom. VIII, 14-16.

I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever, the Spirit of Truth.—But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My Name, He will teach you all things.—John XIV, 16, 26.

Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, Who is in you?—Glorify and bear God in your body.
—I. *Cor.* VI, 19-20.

CHAPTER II

THE SAINTS; THE BLESSED VIRGIN; THE ANGELS

THE VENERATION OF THE SAINTS

The Catholic Church teaches that the Saints reigning with Christ ought to be honoured by us, that they intercede for us, and it is good for us to ask their intercession. The Saints reign with Christ. He says of them: 'He that shall overcome, I will give to sit upon My throne, as I have overcome, and am set down on my Father's throne.' The Saints are honoured by God in the highest degree; they share the glory of their Divine Master and Head. We are, therefore, bound to honour them on the principle laid down by St. Paul—'Honour to whom honour is due,' a principle which is in its nature of universal application to all intelligent beings, according to the image of God which is in them, but especially in proportion to their likeness to God, that is, to their sanctity. This you will not deny. There is no principle on which we should give honour to great and holy men on earth which does not apply in a yet more eminent degree to those truly great and holy beings who reign with Christ in Heaven.—*W. Lockhart.*

THE VENERATION OF SAINTS DOES NOT DIMINISH THE HONOUR GIVEN TO GOD

By honouring the Saints who have slept in the Lord, by invoking their intercession, and venerating their sacred relics and ashes, so far is the glory of God from being diminished, that it is very much increased, in proportion as the hope of men is thus more excited and confirmed, and they are encouraged to the imitation of the Saints. This office (of piety) is also supported by the second Council of Nice, the Councils of Gangra, and of Trent; and by the authority of the Holy Fathers.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

INFINITE DISTINCTION BETWEEN GOD AND THE SAINTS

A little reflection will enable any one to see the infinite distinction between God Who of His own nature knows all things, and is present everywhere; and the Saints and angels who only know much more than man knows upon earth, such knowledge being itself all derived from God, and only such as He is pleased to reveal to them.

—*W. Lockhart.*

SUPERNATURAL POWERS OF THE SAINTS

Holy Scripture informs us that even on earth the Saints of God have exercised supernatural powers, as we read in the lives of the Prophets in the Old Testament, and of the Apostles in the New. They declared future events and occurrences which were taking place at a distance out of sight; they wrought miracles and raised the

dead to life; and in attributing to them such powers we are in no danger of forgetting that they were only agents or instruments. So in attributing to the Saints in Heaven supernatural powers, similar to those which have been enjoyed by some Saints on earth, are we likely to forget that they too are only instruments in the hands of God, and receive all their knowledge and power from Him?

—*W. Lockhart.*

THE SAINTS PERFECT CHRISTIANS

The Saints have been given to us not precisely that we may imitate all that they have done, but as an indication of the assistance of Jesus Christ to His Church, in the bosom of which He produces them to be the monuments of the power of His grace, and the honour of human nature restored by redemption. The Saints are not simply the elect, the just, who will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; they are the Christians who, having practiced all the Christian virtues in a heroic degree, have shone on earth as celestial torches of supernatural perfection, to serve them as an encouragement to the practice of their duties, as its salt to preserve the masses from corruption, to promulgate in an incessant manner the maxims of Christian morality, always exposed to danger from the spirit of the world.

—*Dom Guéranger.*

THE SAINTS DESERVING OF OUR GRATITUDE

Thankful we should be for the Saints of earth; but we are prone to forget that the Saints are of all times, of all climes and of all conditions of life. Or else, the wrath of the Almighty must surely long since have been unchained against our sinful race; and in the deluge of iniquity in which we find ourselves, there would be left none with the heart to continue the work of God. Only on the last day, when the grave shall give up its dead and the record of all lives shall be spread before the gaze of mankind, will it be seen who are the Saints, the full many gems of purest ray supreme held in the vast unfathomed depths of earth.—*John H. Stapleton.*

THE SAINTS THE EXAMPLES WE NEED

The doctrine taught by Jesus Christ is found to be difficult and exceedingly distasteful to the natural man. Now, the Church well knows that it is far easier for her children to learn it by example than by the solemn enunciation of dry precept. The abstract truth one may indeed admire, but it makes little appeal to the sluggish will. We approve and applaud, and then pass on our way, and soon forget the impression it has made. But, when the same truth is presented to us in the concrete, it arrests our attention, and fills us with holy desires. So that when we witness the conduct of holy men, we are inclined to exclaim, with the great Bishop of Hippo, "Why should not we do as these have done?" When we can look upon men and women of the world, practicing heroic virtue, and leading noble and self-denying lives, we soon begin to realize that Sanctity is not a blossom of another clime, but a plant of earthly growth, and that, so far from being unattainable, it may be secured by anyone who is thoroughly determined to do his best to make it his own.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

THE IDEA OF A SAINT NOT REALIZED BY PROTESTANTS

The reason why Protestants object to our mode of honouring the Saints is, because they have not practically realized the idea of a Saint, they have never brought home to their minds as a reality the existence of the Saints, and what their position is at this moment in the courts of Heaven. They do not see the relation in which the Saints stand to them, and hence they do not feel that they have any duties towards them.—*W. Lockhart.*

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

It is wide in its sweep, this principle of Catholic teaching; it proclaims that there are no walls of partition between the souls of the just either this side of the tomb or beyond. There is one limitless kingdom, one wonderful body, one kingdom of God. Through every province of it, triumphant, militant and suffering, course life-giving currents of Divine grace and of human sympathy. Part is close bound to part; and neither sorrow, nor pain, nor death can dissolve the strong bond of fellowship which unites member with member. The Christian can never rejoice, neither can he ever suffer, entirely alone. Whether he lives or whether he dies, he is part of Christ's Body, so to remain throughout eternity.—*Joseph McSorley, C.S.P.*

DEGREES OF GLORY AMONG THE SAINTS

One of the ancient Fathers in the desert had a vision of Heaven. He saw there, as it were, four different companies of Saints, placed one above the other in glory. The lowest group was composed of those who, while on earth, had been afflicted with sickness and bodily infirmities, and had borne them patiently for God's sake. The second group consisted of those who had spent their lives in acts of charity towards their neighbour. In the third group were those holy solitaries who for Christ's sake had left the world to seek the kingdom of God by a life of prayer and penance. All these were enjoying great happiness in God's holy presence.

But the fourth group was still more glorious; and those who composed it seemed to possess even a greater happiness than the others.

The solitary asked the angel who showed him these things who those were who formed that glorious company.

"Those whom you see so high up and so beautiful," answered the angel, "are those who, when in the world, had been obedient. The others served God well, therefore they are now enjoying the reward of their fidelity. But in their good works there was much that was agreeable to themselves. But those who were obedient renounced their own will to submit themselves to the will of others whom God had placed over them, and for this God has bestowed on them a higher degree of glory."

THE SAINTS AND ANGELS KNOW WHAT HAPPENS ON EARTH

Do the Saints and angels know what goes on here on earth? Is there, or is there not, any communication between this world and the world of spirits? Catholics declare their belief in this every time they say "I believe in the Communion of Saints," by which we

mean, amongst other things, that we believe in a real intercommunion and fellowship between the Church militant here on earth and the Church triumphant in Heaven. We find this expressed clearly enough in the words of St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews: "We are come," says the Apostle, "to a great company . . . the Church of the first born, who are written in the heavens. We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses. Many thousands of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect." Here we are clearly told, that we, the children of the Church upon earth, are already come to the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of angels and the spirits of the just, that we have all this great cloud of witnesses around us. Who then can speak of the honour we pay to the Saints and angels as if it were given to dead men and beings far removed from all concern with earth and its inhabitants?—*W. Lockhart.*

HOW CAN THE SAINTS HEAR OUR PRAYERS?

The Saints are not omnipresent, but God is, and they behold our prayers in God as in a mirror, for they incessantly enjoy the vision of God. They are in spiritual union with God and realize everything that God communicates to them. That God wills the inhabitants of Heaven to have knowledge of the things on earth, follows from the words of Christ: "There is more rejoicing in Heaven over one sinner who does penance than over ninety-nine who need not penance."

THE INTERCESSION OF THE SAINTS

In Holy Scripture we have several cases exactly in point; the friends of Job were told by God Himself to go and ask Job to pray for them, for He would not accept their prayers except at Job's intercession. Abimelech received a revelation from God in a vision, telling him to go and get Abraham to pray for him. Aaron offered incense at God's command and interceded for the people. The Saints reigning with Christ offer up their prayers to God for men; it is good and profitable suppliantly to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers and assistance, in order to obtain favours from God through His Son Jesus Christ Our Lord, who is our only Redeemer and Saviour.—*Council of Trent.*

The revelation of God assures us that the same law holds in things Divine as in things human. If I desire a favour of a man, I may ask him directly, or indirectly through his wife or a personal friend. The request ultimately must come to him. So it is in the supernatural life. I may always pray to God through His only Son, or feeling a sense of God's majesty and my own unworthiness, I may pray the Saints to plead my case in the presence of the Lord. The Saints no more interfere with our access to Christ than the pipe which carries the water from the reservoir prevents that water from entering our houses. They are links in the great chain of the Christian fellowship, uniting us one with the other in the bond of Divine love.—*Bertrand L. Conway, C.S.P.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER AN INTERCESSORY PRAYER

If you deny intercessory prayer let me beg you never to use the Lord's Prayer again,—for from first to last it is intercessory prayer, and never again pray for wife, or child, or ask another to pray for you. To do so is to make yourself, or another, a mediator with God, exactly in the sense in which we make the Saints mediators, neither more nor less.—*W. Lockhart.*

A SAINT'S FORTITUDE

Blessed John Fisher was condemned to die because he would not deny his Faith, and would not yield to the iniquitous desires of an ambitious king. As he was advanced in age and weak from the sufferings he had endured, he leant upon his staff as he was led to the place of his death. But when he reached the scaffold he threw away the staff, saying: "Take courage, my feet, you have not much more to do; a few steps more, and you will bring me into the house of my God, where my sufferings shall be changed into joy."

MIRACLES OF SAINTS RECORDED IN THE BIBLE AND IN EARLY WRITINGS

One of the most famous and most highly esteemed of the Saints in the first century of the Christian era was St. Paul. He was consequently greatly beloved and most highly esteemed by the faithful. Knowing him to be a great Apostle and a great Saint, they not only asked his prayers, and sought his blessing, but they showed a reverence for everything that belonged to him, or that had even touched him or been connected with him. And they sought favours and graces both for body and for soul by the reverent use of these purely material objects. "So that," as we are expressly informed by St. Luke (Acts xix.), "they brought handkerchiefs and aprons from his body to the sick" and the feeble. And for what purpose? Well, what possible purpose could a handkerchief or an apron, a remnant of simple linen or cloth, serve? Unless there be some hidden virtue in it arising from its connection with the Saint; unless, in other words, it is to be considered as a relic, we should reply: None. As St. Luke clearly infers, its efficacy was wholly supernatural. He tells us how these objects were applied to the sick, and how, as a consequence, "the diseases departed from them and the wicked spirits went out of them." (Acts xix, 12).—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

In the city of Uzales, in Africa, there lived a man whose name was Concordius. One day, by a fall, his leg was broken, and from that time forward he was not able to walk without using a crutch. Hearing of the wonders that were wrought by the relics of St. Stephen, he dragged himself to a church where part of these relics was preserved. There he prayed with great devotion. Suddenly in the midst of his prayers he felt his leg healed, and, rising up, he was able to walk without the help of his crutch. In thanksgiving to the Saint for his cure, he caused a number of candles to be lighted before the shrine, and, going out, published everywhere the wonderful works of God in His Saints.—*St. Augustine.*

It is related of St. Francis Solanus, the Saint of South America, that through his means a poor woman was cured of an issue of blood. There was an Indian settlement in Sokotonio, Peru, and the drinking water ran dry. St. Francis feared that if the Indians changed the location of the settlement that they would lose their religious faith, which as yet was not strong. He prayed as only a Saint can pray and sweet water gushed from the green earth. Even in the present day, the Spaniards and Indians call the spot the "Well of St. Solanus."

ST. JOSEPH, THE PATRON OF THE DYING

A missionary in South Africa having lost his way came to the house of a Protestant, and made himself known as a Catholic priest. The Protestant said to him: "You have come just in time; one of my workmen, a Catholic, is at the point of death." The priest went at once to visit the dying man. On seeing the priest he said: "Thanks be to God. I knew that St. Joseph would send me a priest to prepare me for death." He told the priest that, when he was a boy, his mother had taught him to pray every day to St. Joseph, saying: "St. Joseph, obtain for me a holy death." When he became a soldier and had to go to South Africa, his mother again admonished him never to omit saying that prayer daily to St. Joseph. This he promised and faithfully kept his promise. When he took sick the nearest priest lived one hundred and fifty miles away, and even if sent for could not have arrived in time to prepare him for death. But St. Joseph sent the missionary to the place where his client was dying, in order to prepare him for a good death by administering to him the last Sacraments.—*F. Girardey, C.SS.R.*

PICTURES OF THE SAINTS

The custom of treasuring the pictures of those dear to us is so general and natural that the Catholic custom of keeping images of Saints should not need any explanation. Since the world dedicates with great solemnity statues to its heroes and scholars, and offers honour to these statues, what is more natural than that we should show honour to the statues of Saints who are greater heroes than worldly effort ever produced. Men have been put to death for trampling on their country's flag. To the mother a picture of her dead child in sacred; but, certainly it is not the flag or picture that are held sacred, but what they represent, and this of course is also the case with the statues and images of Saints. The statues and images of Saints are intended to make it easy for us to devote our thoughts to them. Even in the case of our earthly acquaintances we cannot give earnest thought to them without picturing them to ourselves in our mind. Without pictures and statues, a great inducement to prayer would be lacking. Our custom of venerating the relics of Saints is not different from the custom of the world to venerate the relics of great men that may be seen in every museum. It would be ridiculous to say that in the honour shown to the inkstand of some great poet, for instance, there is adoration, or idol worship, and it is just as ridiculous to say this of our veneration of relics of the Saints.

EFFIGIES AND IMAGES MADE BY THE COMMAND OF GOD

We read in the Scriptures that effigies and images were made, by the command of God, of Cherubim, of the brazen serpent (Num. xxi, 8, *sq.*). It remains, therefore, that we interpret images to have been forbidden only inasmuch as they might be the cause of detracting from the true worship of God, as though they were to be adored as gods.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

THE VENERATION AND EFFICACY OF RELICS

Whom would not the wonders wrought at their tombs convince of the honour which is due to the Saints, and of the "patronage" of us which they undertake? the blind, and the paralyzed restored to their pristine state, the dead recalled to life, and demons expelled from the bodies of men! facts which St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine, most unexceptionable witnesses, declare in their writings, not to have heard, not to have read, but to have *seen*. But why multiply proofs? if the clothes, the kerchiefs (Acts xix, 12), if the shadow of the Saints (Acts v, 15), before they departed life, banished diseases and restored strength, who will have the hardihood to deny that God wonderfully works the same by the sacred ashes, the bones, and other relics of the Saints? This did that body proclaim, which, having been accidentally let down into the sepulchre of Eliseus, "when it had touched the bones" of the Prophet, instantly "came to life" (4 Kings xiii, 21; Eccli. xlviii, 14, sq.).

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

VENERATION OF RELICS AND IMAGES

When we honour or venerate relics and images, we do so, not for their own sake, but for the sake of the persons whose relics or images they are. To accuse us of the contrary is gross calumny. But there is something peculiar about images, in that they represent, *i. e.,* make present to us, or stand for, the person of their original. It is not the material image we honour or worship, the marble, or canvas, or colour; it is the person in the image. The same is true of symbols. Who does not know of the military custom of saluting the flag? The flag stands for the country. Could anyone be so silly as to fancy that it is the country itself which flutters in the breeze? Yet when the flag is honoured it is deemed, and justly, that the country is honoured; and conversely. Tell me, then, what is meant by burning bishops, or popes in *effigy?* . . . How is it childish to honour an image, if it is not childish to dishonour it?—*Cardinal Newman.*

AN ATHEIST ON OUR VENERATION OF PICTURES AND STATUES

Elbert Hubbard (Non-Cath.) had a word to say in rebuke to those who misinterpret our reverence for representations of the friends of God. He declared that the attitude of English Parliament on the question of paganism (in refusing, in 1815, to pay for the Elgin Marbles because "these relics will tend to prostitute England to the depth of unbelief that engulfed pagan Greece") "finds voice occasionally even yet by Protestant England, making darkness dense with the asseveration that Catholics idolatrously worship the pictures and statues in their churches." (*Little Journeys: Raphael.*)

A PROTESTANT ON THE USE OF RELIGIOUS PICTURES

To the Church a picture was only a reminder of the devotion due, and the means of fixing the attention of the worshipper on the subject of his adoration—any contemplation of the refinements of the artist would cause distractions that were not favourable to religious concentration—*W. J. Stillman* (*Non-Cath.*), in *The Century Magazine, August,* 1890.

THE BLESSED VIRGIN

THE MOTHER OF THE LIVING GOD

If Mary is the Mother of God, if she gave birth to Him, of whom St. Paul speaks when he says: "The Church of the Living God, which He (the living God) has purchased with His Own Blood"; if it was the "Blood of the Living God" by whom we were redeemed, it is as strictly true that Mary is Mother of the "Living God."

If she is the Mother of God, she is worthy of Her office, since God does nothing unworthy of Himself; but nothing can fit a creature for any office in relation to God but holiness. Of His material Temple, but still more directly of His living Temple, it was said "Holiness becometh Thy House for ever." Mary's holiness, therefore, must be in proportion to her exaltation to that most sublime dignity, and as God's Mother it is her fitness to hold that dignity. Therefore, it is the greatest holiness existing in creatures. But if Mary is holy, she has the power of holiness; and the power of holiness is the power of prayer, and as there is no holiness like her's so there is no power of prayer like to her's—*W. Lockhart.*

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and His Name shall be called Emmanuel.—Is. VII, 14.

MARY, THE REAL MOTHER OF GOD

It has been held from the first, and defined from an early age, that Mary is the Mother of God. She is not merely the Mother of our Lord's manhood, or of our Lord's Body, but she is to be considered the Mother of the Word Himself, the Word incarnate. God, in the person of the Word, the Second Person of the All glorious Trinity, humbled Himself to become her Son. *"Non horruisti Virginis uterum,"* as the Church sings, "Thou didst not disdain the Virgin's womb." He took the substance of His human flesh from her, and clothed in it He lay within her; and He bore it about with Him after birth, as a sort of badge and witness that He, though God, was hers. He was nursed and tended by her; He was suckled by her; He lay in her arms. As time went on, He ministered to her, and obeyed her. He lived with her for thirty years, in one house, with an uninterrupted intercourse, and with only the saintly Joseph to share it with them. She was the witness of His growth, of His joys, of His sorrows, of His prayers; she was blest with His smile, with the touch of His hand, with the whisper of His affection, with the expression of His thoughts and His feelings for that length of time.

Now, my sermon, what ought she to be, what is it becoming that she should be, who was so favoured?—*Richard Newman.*

But while he thought on these things, behold the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.—Matt. i. 20.

It came to pass that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.—And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him up in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger.—Luke ii. 6.

CHRIST'S CHOICE OF A MOTHER

Jesus Christ was not as other sons, who are incapable of searching their own mothers. The expectant child about to be born, has to yield in the matter. But Christ was God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. It rested with Him, therefore, and wholly and solely with Him, to choose among all women the most worthy and the most fitting for the purpose. His choice lay among all the members of the human race, future as well as present, and equally possible as well as actual. The honour He was about to confer was unique, unparalleled, supreme, and to a most intense degree. Oh, who would the mother be? Would she possess the holy instinct to adore when He might as easily have a spurn? Would she choose a young when she might have a queen? Would He choose one stained and tarnished when He might have one pure and immaculate? Impossible!—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

BY LIVING WITH JESUS MARY CAME TO REFLECT HIS SANCTITY

Do we ask how she came to reflect His sanctity? It was by living with Him. We see every day how the people we are in each other's company the most become like each other. When they live with those they don't love, as for instance the members of a family who quarrel with each other, then the longer they live together the more unlike each other they become, but when they love each other as husband and wife, parents and children, brothers with brothers or sisters, friends with friends, then in course of time they get surprisingly like each other.—*Cardinal Newman.*

MARY, A SECOND EVE

The Apostle sometimes calls Christ Jesus "the last Adam" (1 Cor. xv. 45, 47; Rom. v. 14), and therefore a comparison between Him and the first (or as he was wont to say the second) Adam is the more natural. All men are "made alive" (Gen. xxv. 23; Gen. xl.) and so in the natural order. Adam was the father of the human race as Christ is the author of grace and glory. The Virgin Mother we may also in like manner compare with Eve; making the second Eve, that is Mary, correspond with the first, as we have shown the second Adam, that is Christ, to correspond with the first Adam. For Eve, believing the serpent entailed malediction and death on the human

race (Eph. ii, 3); and, after Mary believed the angel, the Divine goodness made her instrumental in bringing benediction and life to men. From Eve we are born "children of wrath" (Gen. iii, 16); from Mary we have received Jesus Christ, through whom we are regenerated children of grace. To Eve it was said: "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children" (Gen. iii, 16): Mary was exempt from this law, for, preserving inviolate the integrity of her virginal chastity, she brought forth Jesus the Son of God, without, as we have already said, any sense of pain.

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.—Gen. III, 15.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

That Jesus Christ was, in a manner altogether supernatural, "conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary," is something which every thinking Christian believes, and professes when he recites the Creed. This is the Virgin Birth. To breathe such a thing as stain in connection with the coming into the world of the Son of God, is a sacrilege that amounts to a categorical denial of His Divinity. Mary's part in that mystery was that of a woman chosen to be a vessel containing the Holy of Holies; in this mystery she becomes the mother of God. But between Mary conceiving her Son, and Mary being herself conceived, there is a whole world of difference. It is to this latter fact, the mystery of her being conceived immaculately in the womb of her mother St. Ann, that the Immaculate Conception refers. A whole generation separated these two mysteries in point of time; eternity alone can measure the quality that differentiates them in point of dignity.—*John H. Stapleton.*

No defiled thing cometh unto her. For she is the brightness of Eternal Light and the unspotted mirror of God's Majesty, and the image of His goodness.—Wisd. VII, 25-26. (*See Gradual for Feast of the Most Pure Heart of Mary.*)

The conception of Mary Immaculate did not exclude all human agency, all natural operation, as did that of her Divine Son. Mary's parents were truly parents to her in the obvious meaning of the word. Nor may we pretend that the grace she enjoyed was any more than an exemption, made in view of a future dignity that precluded the very thought of sin, altogether undue, unessential to her nature. It was a pure gift, raising her higher than all other creatures, but leaving her nevertheless a pure creature with an engrafted endowment, "an unfallen child of Adam." Nearer to God than any of us, she is as far from being Divine as the least of us. She needed redemption like all of us; but whereas redemption is applied to us by means of Baptism, it was supplied to her by anticipation, at the moment that she began to exist.—*John H. Stapleton.*

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY AND THE SANCTIFICATION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

There was one great approach to this singular privilege of Mary. We are told that St. John the Baptist was sanctified before his birth, at the meeting between St. Elizabeth and the Blessed Virgin. Such sanctification is as solitary as that of Mary; but it is wide asunder from it. Mary's soul was created full of grace, an object of love to God, St. John's as that of a fallen parent's child, blasted by his folly; Mary's soul received sanctifying grace with its existence, St. John's was without it till Mary came over the hills of Judaea to visit his saintly mother. Mary's soul began to exist full of grace, she was immaculate at her conception; St. John's began to exist devoid of grace, but received it before birth, through a special gift of God.—*P. Sexton.*

THE EXALTATION OF MARY NECESSITATED BY HER OFFICE

A mother without a home in the Church, without dignity, without gifts, would have been, as far as the defence of the Incarnation goes, no mother at all. She would not have remained in the memory, or the imagination of men. If she is to witness and remind the world that God became man, she must be on a high and eminent station for the purpose. She must be made to fill the mind, in order to suggest the lesson. When she once attracts our attention, then, and not till then, she begins to preach Jesus. "Why should she have such prerogatives," we ask, "unless He be God? and what must He be by nature, when she is so high by grace?" This is why she has other prerogatives besides, namely, the gifts of personal purity and intercessory power, distinct from her maternity; she is personally endowed that she may perform her office well; she is exalted in herself that she may minister to Christ.—*Cardinal Newman.*

Blessed art thou, O daughter, by the Lord the Most High God, above all women of the earth.—Judith XIII, 23.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, and my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; and with the robe of justice He hath covered me, and as a bride adorned with her jewels.—Is. LXI, 10.

Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel, thou art the honour of our people.—Judith XV, 10.

Thou art beautiful, O My love, sweet and comely as Jerusalem: terrible as an army set in array.—Cant. VI, 3.

Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken from her.—Luke X, 42. (*See Gospel for Feast of the Assumption.*)

JESUS AND MARY CANNOT BE SEPARATED

The two, Jesus and Mary, cannot and must not be separated. Together they were from all eternity in God's plan of the redemption of mankind; together we find them in the stable at Bethlehem;

together we find them in sorrow on Calvary; together we find them in glory in Heaven; together we find them in the history of the Church, in the liturgy of the Church and in the hearts of the children of the Church. The Infant Jesus without Mary is a King without a throne, and Mary without the Child is a queen without a crown.—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

Mother! whose virgin bosom was uncrost
With the least shade of thought to sin allied;
Woman! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast;
Purer than foam on central ocean tost.

—*Wordsworth.*

TWO ALTARS ON MT. CALVARY

"Ah," cries a Saint, "I see two altars upon Mount Calvary! One in the heart of Mary, one in the flesh of Christ. Christ is offering up His flesh, Mary is offering up her soul. For she desires indeed to add her own blood to the Blood of her Son, and with the Lord Jesus to consummate the mystery of our redemption by the death of her body; but that is alone the privilege of our great High Priest, that with blood He should enter into the Holy of Holies."

—*Bede Camm, O.S.B.*

THE WORD "WOMAN" EXPLAINED BY PROTESTANT SCHOLARS

Setting aside all Catholic authorities, who may be thought to be prejudiced, let us turn to the reliable and very well known Greek dictionary by the two Protestant scholars Liddell and Scott, and we shall find, on such unimpeachable authority, that "gunai" means "lady," and further that it is not a term of reproach, but "a term of respect." The distinguished Protestant scholar, Dr. Westcott, writes: "In the word 'woman,' as employed in the Greek, there is not the slighest tinge of reproof or of severity. The address is that of courteous respect, even of tenderness." Hence when Our Lord at the wedding feast of Cana addressed His blessed mother as "woman," He used a term of respect.

If this is not proof enough to satisfy the most scrupulous Protestant, perhaps he may be convinced by the yet more explicit words of the well-known Richard Whately, the Protestant archbishop of Dublin. In a published sermon (*Sermons on Various Subjects; sermon ix, p.* 226) this Anglican divine writes of Our Blessed Lady, on the memorable occasion of the marriage feast, as follows: "She applied to Him, when the wine was deficient. His answer has not that roughness, indeed, which our English translation gives it, from the use of the term 'woman.' The word" (he goes on to explain), "in the original, is one which denotes no disrespect, being found in the classical Greek writers applied even to a queen." Thus we see that even a Protestant archbishop, because he is a scholar and a learned man, openly admits that the word, so far from denoting dishonour, is commonly applied to the highest ladies of the land, even to queens, and this, too, by the best classical writers.

MARY GRIEVED BY SIN

The grief of Mary, at the sight of her only Son crucified, was less than that caused her by seeing a man offend Him by sin.

—*St. Ignatius.*

MARY THE EXAMPLE FOR ALL STATES OF LIFE

God willed that Mary went through all states of life so that all states of life might have in her an example to live according to God's will.—*St. Theresa.*

MARY OUR MODEL

Our exceptional love for Mary springs from many sources. But we love her more than all other mere creatures, chiefly because God has commanded us to follow Him and to walk in His footsteps; "Learn of Me," "I am the way," etc. And He Himself, our model, loved her more than all.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

MARY THE LIGHT OF THE CHURCH

Take Mary out of the Church and what is left but darkness!

—*St. Thomas of Villanova.*

THE DEATH OF MARY

It became Him, who died for the world to die in the world's sight; it became the Great Sacrifice to be lifted up on high, as a light that could not be hid. But she, the Lily of Eden, who had always dwelt out of the sight of man, fittingly did she die in the garden's shade, and amid the sweet flowers, in which she had lived. Her departure made no noise in the world. The Church went about her common duties, preaching, converting, suffering, there were persecutions, there was fleeing from place to place, there were martyrs, there were triumphs; at length the rumour spread abroad that the Mother of God was no longer upon earth. Pilgrims went to and fro; they sought for her relics; but they found them not; did she die at Ephesus? or did she die at Jerusalem? reports varied; but her tomb could not be pointed out, or if it was found, it was open; and instead of her pure and fragrant body, there was a growth of lilies from the earth which she had touched. So inquirers went home marvelling, and waiting for further light. And then it was said, how that when her dissolution was at hand, and her soul was to pass in triumph before the judgment-seat of her Son, the Apostles were suddenly gathered together in the place, even in the Holy City, to bear part in the joyful ceremonial; how that they buried her with fitting rites; how that the third day, when they came to the tomb, they found it empty, and angelic choirs with their glad voices were heard singing day and night the glories of their risen Queen. But, however we feel towards the details of this history (nor is there anything in it which will be unwelcome or difficult to piety), so much cannot be doubted, from the consent of the whole Catholic world and the revelations made to holy souls, that, as is befitting, she is, soul and body, with her Son and God in Heaven, and that we are enabled to celebrate, not only her death, but her Assumption.

—*Cardinal Newman.*

Most undoubtedly she passed through the gates of death into life

eternal. This is the universal belief of the Church. Not that she merited death, since the law of death, as revealed in the inspired pages, is the punishment of those only who have been guilty of sin, and as Mary was exempt from original sin, as well as from all actual sin, therefore was she also exempt from its penalty. Nor can it be urged that death must ensue in consequence of her human nature, for, in her case, the claim of nature is superseded by a supernatural claim to immortality; which would have been true even of Adam and Eve, had they not sinned, and therefore, much more so in the case of Mary. On the other hand, Mary is the mother of Him, who died for us, so that it was becoming and fitting that she should die also, and for two reasons, firstly, lest she and her Son's nature's should be thought unreal, and, secondly, lest the human Mother should be privileged above her Divine Son.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

Disobedience closed to the first Eve the gates of the earthly paradise, into which her sinlessness through grace had given her a right to enter. Obedience opened to the second Eve the gates of the heavenly paradise, into which she had won a right to enter by her sinlessness through grace. And so, in obedience to the decree of the Eternal King, she first passed through the gates of death; even as, in obedience to the decree of an earthly king, she had passed in life through the gates of her native village. And as her passing through the gates of Nazareth was but an incident of her journey to Bethlehem, so was her passing through the gates of death but an incident of that last journey, from earth to Heaven. Through those same gates One had gone before her who robbed death of its sting and the grave of its victory. Disease she knew not; physical pang there was none. Her agony she had borne long aforetime at the foot of the Cross. Gently she passed, as one who goes into a sleep, or as the fruit that is ripe falls of itself from the tree. Love, stronger than death, claimed her, and to Love's sweet attraction she yielded her life. Love had sown good seed in a towardly soil; the seed had taken root, and grown, and borne fruit; the fruit had ripened; the time of gathering had come. It was autumn in the land of Juda, when the angels gathered to God this fairest of all earth's fruits. It beseemed Him, who was at once the sower and the seed, to pass in the springtime, when seed is sown: *unless the grain of Wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.* Her it beseemed to await the time of reaping, when the grain is ripe and the fields are white unto harvest.—*Bishop A. MacDonald.*

THE ASSUMPTION

St. Matthew informs us that at Our Saviour's death upon the Cross, "the graves were opened, and many bodies of the Saints that slept arose; and, issuing from the tombs, after the Resurrection, came into the Holy City, and appeared unto many. Thus, there is no doubt but that, on rising from the tomb, Christ, who was "the first fruit of the dead," caused many of the dead also to arise in their bodies. And it is the teaching of such sound authorities as St. Ignatius Martyr, Origen, Eusebius, Epiphanius and others, that these did not return to corruption and the grave, but were assumed up to

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Heaven in their bodies, with Our Blessed Lord, at the time of His Ascension. Now, if this opinion be admitted, who will have the hardihood to deny a similar privilege to the great Mother of God and Queen of the heavenly host? To say that such a favour was conferred upon ordinary Saints, and those, too, belonging to the old dispensation, and it was withheld from the highest and holiest of all creatures, is an outrage upon reason and common sense.

—Bishop John S. Vaughan.

MARY'S SUBMISSION TO GOD'S WILL

In considering the flight into Egypt, we must admire the nobility of our Lady's heart, as well as that of her Divine Child, as, according to St. John Chrysostom, Mary might have replied thus to the angel who urged them to take flight: "Not long ago thou didst tell me that He should deliver His people from their sins, and now He cannot even deliver Himself from danger of death; we have to take refuge in a strange land, and this fact appears to contradict the words that thou didst utter recently." But our Lady said nothing of the kind; she submitted readily to God's will.

THE DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

To have a solid devotion to the Blessed Virgin means to study and imitate her as a model, and to implore her motherly help with the simplicity and confidence of a child.—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

THE HUMILITY OF MARY

What was the special virtue beyond all others that won for our Blessed Lady the unapproachable dignity and glory of giving birth to the Son of God, and of reigning forever as Queen of Heaven and of earth? Surely, it was her unparalleled and most profound humility. "He hath regarded," says the inspired writer, "the *humility* of His handmaid." Then comes the consequence. "Behold, from henceforth, all generations shall call me blessed."

—Bishop John S. Vaughan.

THE INTERCESSION OF MARY

As this our great advocate once said to St. Bridget, she regards not the iniquities of the sinner who has recourse to her, but the disposition with which he invokes her aid. If he comes to her with a firm purpose of amendment she receives him, and by her intercession she heals his wounds, and brings him to salvation. "However great a man's sins may be, if he shall return to me, I am ready instantly to receive him. Nor do I regard the number or the enormity of his sins, but the will with which he comes to me; for I do not disdain to anoint and heal his wounds, because I am called, and truly am, the mother of mercy."—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

THE PRAYERS OF MARY

The prayers of the Saints are the prayers of servants; but the prayers of Mary are prayers of a mother, and therefore, they are regarded in a certain manner as commands by her Son, who loves her so tenderly. It is then impossible that the prayers of Mary should be rejected.—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

MARY'S PRAYERS INFALLIBLY HEARD

So great is Mary's merit in the eyes of God, that her prayers are infallibly heard.—*St. Bonaventure.*

THE POWER OF MARY'S INTERCESSION

If all the devils should be arraigned against me before the judgment-seat of God, if the whole of hell should rise up against me and open its jaws to devour me; if all the Saints should desert me; if thou, O Mary, wouldst only speak one word of intercession I should be saved.—*Suarez.*

A MOTHER'S PRAYER

General Coriolanus having received an offense from the citizens of Rome, resolved, in revenge, to join the army of the enemy.

The hostile army were already drawn up before the gates of the city, and threatened to destroy it. The Romans, perceiving that their former invincible general led the van, were filled with dismay, and clearly saw that any resistance would be useless. They sent messengers to him asking for peace, but he refused to grant it, and told them that for the dishonour the people of the city had heaped upon him he would show them no mercy.

Finally, as a last resource, they thought of his mother and they besought her to intercede for them, that for her sake he might spare the city.

When Coriolanus saw his mother approaching, tears came into his eyes; and when she asked him to have pity upon the ungrateful inhabitants for her sake, he said: "My mother, you have overcome my resentment. Your intercession has saved my enemies." Thereupon he departed, along with his army, and Rome was saved.

Will Jesus Christ refuse to listen, if His Mother requests Him to show us mercy?

THE HAIL MARY

The prayer, which can most emphatically be called the prayer of the Blessed Virgin, is the Hail Mary. It is an authentic formula, sanctioned by God and the Church and endorsed by all Christian ages and generations. It embodies all the characteristics of the devotion to the Blessed Lady and eminently produces its great and glorious effects. It is a polished mirror, focusing all that is best in the various forms of the devotion to Mary; even as the sparkling glow of the diamond flashes forth all the bright colours and tints which other precious gems only reflect in part. There is no exaggeration in the words of the devout Thomas à Kempis, when he says: "When I recite the Hail Mary Heaven rejoices, the earth marvels, Satan withdraws, hell trembles, all sadness vanishes, joy returns, the heart glows, the soul is filled with holy unction; hope animates my bosom and a wonderful consolation gladdens my whole being." The holy Fathers are unanimous in extolling the merits and the power of the Hail Mary. Let us quote one more passage. It reads: "The Hail Mary is small in extent, but great as to the

effects; it is sweeter than honey and more precious than gold. It should be frequently on our lips and re-echo in our hearts."

—Charles Bruehl

THE "HAIL MARY," ON THE BATTLE-FIELD

Father Weninger S. J. relates that he once met a French officer who was a Protestant, but who had married a Catholic lady. During the conversation the officer said: "What I like most about Catholics is that they honour Mary with so much devotion. I myself am a Protestant," he added, "but I am delighted to hear my wife and my children say so often: 'Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of death.' Let me tell you what once happened to me in Paris: During the great Revolution of 1848 General Bignau rode up to my house in great haste, and said, 'Come my friend, hasten to the barricades!' I embraced my wife and children, mounted my horse and galloped forward to oppose the rebels. I have been in many battles, but the most terrible of them can bear no comparison to that street fight. When the bullets of the insurgents were whistling past me like hail in a tempest, I thought of the prayers that were being said for me at that moment by my dear wife and little ones, and in the roar and din of the conflict I also said within my heart: 'Holy Mary, Mother of God pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Mary, pray for me!' I did not receive even the slightest wound."

THE "HAIL MARY" CONVERTING A HARDENED CRIMINAL

A certain man was, on account of his great crimes, condemned to death. A priest, full of zeal for the salvation of his soul, went to him to prepare him to die well. But the wretched man would not as much as allow him to speak to him about God and eternity. The priest besought him with words full of earnest entreaty, and even threw himself at his feet, to try to touch his heart. But all was of no avail; the heart of the criminal, harder than flint, would not yield. As a last resource, the priest had recourse to the most holy Mother of God; then, full of the most heartfelt compassion for the wretched man, he said to him: "Before I leave you, will you grant me one little favour?" The man, more to get rid of him than from the desire of pleasing him, answered that he would. "Let us, then say together one 'Hail Mary!'"

So they began together that holy prayer. But scarcely had they said the first words of it, when there came over the poor man a feeling of repentance. Tears fell from his eyes, and the next instant he was on his knees at the feet of the priest, and when the prayer was ended he begged of him to hear his Confession. He then confessed his sins with every mark of sincere sorrow, and when the time of his execution came he calmly died, pressing the image of Mary to his breast.

THE POWER OF "HAIL MARY"

The secret of the power of the Hail Mary lies in the intercession of the Blessed Virgin. As powerful, as widely extended, as reliable and efficacious, as is the intercession of the Blessed Mother, so

owerful and efficacious is the Hail Mary; for it is especially and rincipally through the Hail Mary that we obtain and secure the ntercession of our Blessed Lady. There is no prayer that will render he Mother of God so propitious to us, so ready to hear our petitions, o willing to take into her own spotless hands our cause, and to plead n our behalf with her Divine Son, as the Hail Mary. It is the golden ey to her maternal heart. It gains the ear and the good will of he Blessed Lady for us and makes us sure of her powerful inter- ession. We will try to understand why the Hail Mary has such a ower over the heart of our Blessed Mother, and, hence, why it is or us such an unfailing means of grace and inexhaustible source f heavenly favours. We find the explanation in its threefold haracter; the Hail Mary being a prayer of praise, of thanksgiving, nd of petition. And in each one of these qualities it is unsurpassed nd unrivaled.—*Charles Bruehl.*

HAIL MARY, FULL OF GRACE" IS ALSO PRAISE OF GOD

Among the congratulations which are offered to God on account f the Saints is the first part of the Angelical Salutation when we use t by way of prayer; "Hail" Mary, "Full of grace, the Lord is with hee, blessed art thou among women" (Luke i, 28); for we render to God the highest praise, and return Him most grateful thanks, be- ause He accumulated all His heavenly gifts on the most Holy Virgin; and the Virgin herself we congratulate on this her singular elicity. But to this thanksgiving the Church of God has justly dded prayers also to, and an invocation of, the most holy Mother f God, by which we might devoutly and suppliantly fly to her, that y her intercession she may conciliate God to us sinners, and obtain or us those blessings which we stand in need of in this life, and in he life to come. Exiled children of Eve, who dwell in this vale f tears, we ought, therefore, earnestly to beseech the Mother of Mercy, and the Advocate of the faithful people, to pray for us sinners, nd to implore by this prayer aid and assistance from her whose xalted merits with God and whose earnest desire to assist mankind by her prayers), it were impious and wicked for any one to doubt.

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

HE ROSARY

Verily, the Rosary is both an epitome of the Old Testament and n abridgment of the New. This we will better understand on a ittle serious reflection. The Old Testament contains a number of rophetic books, which proclaim chiefly the character, the power, the lory and the dignity of the Messiah, together with a portrayal of His sufferings, His triumph, the grandeur and perpetuity of His ingdom, the Church. With these is joined the history of the Jewish ation—of that strange people chosen to guard the sacred prophecies. The New Testament records the fulfilment of these prophecies.

—*C. H. McKenna, O. P.*

The Church divides the ecclesiastical year into certain periods f joy, of sorrow, and of triumph. Here, again, the Rosary offers he faithful an easy and most efficacious means of entering into her pirit, of uniting in her sublime liturgy. But millions of the faithful

are unable to unite with the priest in the chanting of the Divine Office, or at the daily sacrifice of the Mass. To all such the Rosary affords an admirable means of uniting heart and soul in the worship of God, in accord with the spirit of the Church. The beads supply the place of the Psalms, by enabling us to glorify our Creator and accomplish His adorable will. The Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries of our Rosary unite us with the thought of the Church in the different seasons set apart to commemorate the life, passion, death and triumph of the Saviour. Hence, the Rosary is called the breviary of the laity, the catechism of youth, the companion and solace of old age, the instructor of the simple, and an inexhaustible book of meditation for our greatest theologians.

—C. H. McKenna, O. P.

THE ROSARY AS A MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION

As a means of sanctification, apart from the Sacraments and the Mass, there is nothing more powerful than the Rosary. It is a key to the most intimate knowledge of Jesus and Mary. It is an effective way of attaining to the perfection of charity. The young artist is taught to turn his eyes frequently on the works of the great masters, that he may learn to produce masterpieces like unto theirs. Now, Jesus is the Master of the Christian life; He is the Model whom we should all study to imitate. "Be ye followers of me," says St. Paul, "as I also am of Christ." By ever turning to contemplate that sublime Model the Christian soul will gradually imbibe His spirit, and will become an humble, though on imperfect, imitator of His sinless life. In the language of St. Paul, he will "put on the Lord Jesus Christ."—*C. H. McKenna, O. P.*

THE ROSARY, A CONTEMPLATION OF JESUS AND MARY

Inseparably united with the life of Our Lord is that of His Immaculate Mother. It is her Son whom the Rosary proposes for our meditation. As Jesus was the most perfect of men, so Mary was the most perfect of women. If we are tempted to say that the life of Jesus, since He is divine, is too elevated for our imitation, the temptation must be dispelled by the contemplation of a creature, like ourselves, reflecting His perfections even as the moon reflects the brilliancy of the sun.—*C. H. McKenna, O. P.*

CONSTANCY IN THE DEVOTION TO MARY

When St. John Berchmans was lying on his deathbed, and on the point of appearing before God, the superior came to his room, accompanied by all the other religious of the house. Kneeling by the side of the dying Saint, he said to him: "My dear brother, you are on the point of appearing before God; before leaving us, I beg of you to tell us what special devotion we ought to practice in honour of Our Blessed Lady, that we may obtain her protection every day of our lives, and in particular at the hour of our death." The dying Saint answered: "Any devotion you choose, provided it be constant."

MARY, OUR HELP IN TEMPTATIONS

A young man who had many times fallen into grievous mortal

ins went to Confession to a certain priest. The good priest was reatly afflicted on learning that he had fallen so often; but, to encourage him, he said: "My son, I will tell you an easy means of overoming the temptations to which you have so often yielded. If you o what I tell you, you will never fall again. Place yourself entirely nder the protection of the Blessed Virgin. Say a 'Hail Mary' every norning and evening in honour of her immaculate purity; and whenver you are tempted to do evil, say to her at once, 'O Mary, help ne, for I am thine.'" The young man followed his advice, and in short time was entirely delivered from his evil habits.

IARY, OUR TEACHER

When Father de Smet. of the Society of Jesus, was preachng the Gospel to the natives of Oregon, there was a little orphan-boy amed Paul, who had the greatest difficulty in learning his Catechism, nd even his prayers. He was an innocent boy, and full of piety; e was especially fond of asking the Blessed Virgin to pray for him.

One of the Christians of that place, seeing that the boy had the reatest difficulty in learning the truths of Faith, charitably offered o teach him; yet, notwithstanding his great patience, Paul could ot retain the instructions given him. On Christmas Eve, in the year 841, Paul went as usual to the hut of the good Christian to learn is prayers and his Catechism, but his friend was absent, and Paul esolved to wait for his return. It was dark, and there was no light n the hut. Suddenly the place was filled with a dazzling light, and n the midst of it stood a beautiful lady. She taught him his prayers, nd instantly disappeared. Paul immediately ran to the house where Father de Smet dwelt, and full of joy began to recite his prayers. This time he said them all, from beginning to end, without one istake.

"Tell me, my child," said the father, "how you have been able o learn your prayers so quickly. Surely God Himself must have ome and taught you."

Paul answered: "While I was waiting for my friend to come home t began to be very dark, and in an instant the room was filled with —oh, such a brilliant light! Then I saw a beautiful lady enter. Her feet did not touch the ground, and she was dressed in a white obe with a veil upon her head. I also saw bright rays of light oming from her hands and falling upon me. On seeing this beautiul lady I was at first filled with great fear, but in a few moments he fear went away. Then I felt my heart, as it were, burning in ny breast, and my mind became so clear that I could understand all hings at once." Thus did the Blessed Virgin respond to the prayers f Paul.

IARY AND THE ORPHAN GIRL

There was once a little girl who had just lost her mother. She vas left alone in the world, with no one to care for her, no one to ove her. "Oh, my mother! my mother!" cried out the little child, what will now become of me? Who will give me something to eat, vho will protect me?" And the tears fell from her eyes upon her nother's grave, as she knelt there, forsaken and alone. When night

came on, she rose from the ground to go away. But whither was she to go? She had no home now. She suddenly remembered that nearby stood a little chapel dedicated to Mary, the Mother of God; so she went towards it.

Going in, she knelt down before Our Lady's image, and with eyes filled with tears, she thus began to pray: "O my most sweet, heavenly Mother Mary, my poor dear mother on earth is dead, and I have no one to take pity on me. Ah! dear Mother Mary, do not forsake your lonely child in her afflictions."

And as she was thus praying, a sudden and dazzling light began to fill the chapel, and she heard the strains of the most ravishing music that ever fell on mortal ears. In the midst of the brightness there appeared a beautiful lady, clad in a raiment whiter than snow. On her head was a crown of the purest gold, and she was accompanied by a choir of the heavenly host singing joyously.

The lady, smiling sweetly on the child, said to her: "I am Mary, the Mother of God. I have heard your prayer, and I will be your mother, and you shall be my child."

When she had said this, she placed her hand upon the forehead of the little girl, as a sign of adoption, and then disappeared.

The child's heart was now filled with joy and consolation. She arose from her knees to face with courage the trials and tempests of a wicked world. She now feared nothing, because she knew that under the protection of her Mother in Heaven she would be safe from every danger, if she remained virtuous.

When the time of her exile was ended, Mary was again by the side of her child to help her to die well; and when the end came she carried her happy soul to Heaven, to rejoice for ever in the presence of God.

MIRACULOUSLY CURED THROUGH MARY'S INTERCESSION

St. Philip Neri's love and devotion to Our Lady were deep and fervent. No child ever loved his earthly mother as tenderly as Philip loved Mary. He called her his love, his joy, his consolation, and uttered these words with so much tenderness that those who heard him were moved to tears.

Whenever he wanted anything from Jesus, he asked it through Mary; she seemed to lead him, as it were, to the feet of His heavenly throne, and procure for him whatever he asked. One day, while lying on a bed of sickness, and so ill that the physicians themselves thought he would never rise again, he was suddenly heard to exclaim: "O my most holy Mother, my most beauteous and blessed Mother!" The physicians and priests present hastened to his side, and heard him exclaim: "Dearest Lady, I am not worthy of this favour. I do not deserve that thou shouldst come to visit and heal me. What return shall I make to thee if thou restoreth me to health—I, who have never done any good?" To the surprise of all, he arose from his bed perfectly cured. Our Blessed Lady had healed him.

MY MOTHER MARY

St. Francis Xavier had always a great love for the blessed Mother of God. He used to call her his Mother—"my own sweet Mother

ary." When he was at the point of death, and trembled as he ought of the judgment he was so soon to undergo, he turned his es heavenward towards Mary, and said to her "O Mary, I have ways loved thee as my Mother! show me now at this terrible oment that thou *art* my Mother." He died the death of the Saints. ie words, "Show thyself to be my Mother," were the last he was ard to utter.

AYERS THAT COME FROM A SINFUL HEART

There was once a young man who had the evil habit of committing is against holy purity. From the days of his childhood he had ways honoured the holy Mother of God as his pious mother had ught him; and although living in the state of sin, he every day said me prayers in her honour. One night he had a strange dream. e dreamed that he had gone out to walk in a forest, and that he d lost his way. He wandered about for a long time looking for e path, but in vain. Soon he began to feel the pangs of hunger, d he looked on all sides for something to eat, but found nothing. Suddenly there appeared before him a beautiful lady surrounded th a heavenly light, who came to him and placed before him the st delicious food that he had ever seen, but on a dish which was ceedingly filthy. The sight of the dish filled him with disgust, and hough he was almost dying of hunger, he could not bring himself taste the tempting food upon the plate. The lady said to him: Take and eat this delicious food I have brought to you." "Oh, w willingly would I eat of it?" he answered, "because I am hungry d the food is tempting, but I cannot eat it out of that loathsome sh!" The lady (it was the Blessed Virgin) then said: "The prayers hich you say in my honour every day are indeed beautiful in them- ves, but your heart is so impure. How can you expect that I can ceive with pleasure prayers from a soul steeped in the filth of sin?" aving said these words, she disappeared, and the young man awoke. Ah!" he said, "my soul is indeed black and filthy on account of the is I have committed, but from this hour I will change my life and ver sin again."

IE DEVOTION OF THE SEVEN DOLOURS

St. John once heard the Blessed Virgin ask our Divine Saviour to ant some special favour to those who should keep her Dolours remembrance. Our Lord replied that He would grant four parti- lar graces to all those who should practice this devotion. These e the four graces He is said to have promised: 1. Perfect contrition r all their sins some time before their death. 2. A special protection the hour of death, at that hour when souls are most in need of lp. 3. That He would imprint deeply on their hearts the mysteries His Sacred Passion. 4. A particular power of impetration granted Mary's prayers on their behalf.—*Father Faber.*

E ANGELUS PRAISED BY A PROTESTANT WRITER

Robert Lynd, a Presbyterian, has this passage in his book *Home fe in Ireland:* "If you are in a little town in any part of Ireland— cept the northwest—about noon, when the chapel beells ring for the

Angelus, you will see all the men suddenly taking off their hats and crossing themselves as they say their midday prayers. The world loses its air of work or of commonplace idleness, and the streets take on an intense beauty for the moment as the old people and the young people half hide their eyes and murmur a prayer to the Mother of God. . . . I confess I like this daily forgetfulness of the world in the world in the middle of the day. It brings wonder into almost every country town in Ireland at least once every day."

THE PETITION OF A PROTESTANT POET

Ah, Mary, pierced with sorrow,
Remember, reach and save
The soul that comes to-morrow
Before the God that gave!
Since each was born of woman,
For each at utter need—
True comrade and true foeman—
Madonna, intercede!

—*Rudyard Kipling*

THE PRAYER OF A NON-CATHOLIC POET

Oh, when our need is uttermost,
Think that to such as death may strike
Thou once wert sister sister-like!

—*D. G. Rossetti*

THE TRIBUTE OF A PROTESTANT POET

And even as children, who have much offended
A too indulgent father, in great shame,
Penitent, and yet not daring unattended
To go into his presence, at the gate
Speak with their sister, and confiding wait
Till she goes in before and intercedes;
So men, repenting of their evil deeds,
And yet not venturing rashly to draw near
With their requests an angry Father's ear,
Offer to her their prayers and their confession,
And she for them in Heaven makes intercession.

—*Longfellow*

THE ANGELS

THE CREATION OF THE ANGELS

God created angels innumerable, to serve and minister to Him and these he afterwards enriched and adorned with the admirable gifts of His grace and power. For that the devil and the rest of the rebel angels had been gifted at their creation with grace, is clear since in the Sacred Scriptures we read that the devil "stood not in the truth" (John viii, 44). On which subject, St. Augustine has as follows: "He created the angels with a good will, that is, with pure love, by which they might adhere to Him, at once forming in them a nature, and bestowing on them grace. Hence we are to believe that the holy angels never were without good will, that is, the love

of God" *(De Civit. Dei, xii, 9)*. As to their knowledge, there is extant this testimony of Holy Scripture: "Thou, Lord, my King, art wise according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to understand all things upon earth" (2 Kings xiv, 20). Finally, to them the inspired David ascribes power in these words: "Mighty in strength, executing His word" (Ps. cii, 20); and hence it is that they are often called in Scripture "the powers" and "the hosts" of the Lord. But although they had been all adorned with celestial gifts, very many, nevertheless, who revolted from God, their Parent and Creator, being hurled from those loftiest mansions, and shut up in the darkest dungeon of the earth, suffer the eternal punishment of their pride, of whom the Prince of the Apostles writes thus: "He "spared not the angels that sinned; but delivered them, drawn down by infernal ropes to the lower hell, into torments, to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Pet. ii, 4).

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

THE NATURE OF THE ANGELS

The Vatican Council speaks of them as "spiritual," and contrasts them with man, who is made up of matter, as well as spirit. Everything that we read about the angels in Holy Scripture makes it clear that they are not as we are. Except by means of some supernatural intervention, they are invisible to the eyes of the body. Had they bodily frames as we have, we should see them without the need of a miracle to enable us to do so. Not till his eyes were opened by the Lord, not otherwise, that is, than by some special intervention, was Balaam able to see the angel of the Lord. "Forthwith the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel standing in the way with a drawn sword, and he worshipped him, falling flat to the ground" (Num. xxiii, 31). The angel who appeared to Gedeon disappeared so suddenly from his sight, by which fact he knew that it was an angel who had been speaking with him. "The angel of the Lord vanished out of his sight. And Gedeon seeing that it was the angel of the Lord, said: Alas, my Lord God: for I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face" (Judges vi, 21, 22).

—*H. G. Hughes.*

THE CONDITION OF AN ANGEL

An angel is will and intelligence unhampered and untrammeled by the flesh. How often our soul sighs to be free from bodily hindrances; to feel no longer the fatigue and heaviness which oppress the bodily frame. Such is the condition of God's holy angels. And, to take another thought, what intense activity may be exercised in the spiritual part of our nature while the body is still. What wide tracts we can range over in thought; what violent struggles can take place in our inmost souls; what burning desires, what joy, what deepest grief, what serenity and what desolation our spirits can experience, yet none know by any external act what is taking place within. From our own inner experience, then, by multiplying a thousandfold the energies of our souls, we may gain some notion of the vast activities of those spirits whom God has created, unfettered by fleshly bond, to be His court and to do His behests. This, then, is another truth taught us by Holy Scripture and the Church, that

angels are purely spiritual, without any admixture of material and bodily elements.—*H. G. Hughes.*

ANGELS PICTURED

To angels are fashioned both the human form and wings, that the faithful may understand how benevolent they are towards the human race, and that they are ever ready to execute the embassies of the Lord; for "they are all ministering spirits, sent to minister for these who shall receive the inheritance of salvation" (Heb. I, 14).—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

THE SIN OF THE FALLEN ANGELS

The angels who fell, like those who stood firm, were created for God's glory and their own happiness. But God would have free and willing service, and to this end it was necessary that his glorious creatures, the angels, should be endowed with free will, with the mastery over their own actions, with the power of choice between God's service or the worship and service of self. We can gather from Holy Scripture that the sin of the angels was a sin of immense and overweening pride. St. Paul, writing to his disciple Timothy, warns him not to elevate to the episcopate one who is a new convert, "but," he says, "being puffed up with pride, he fell into the judgment of the devil:" into the judgment, that is, into which the devil himself fell. "Satan," writes St. Athanasius, "was not driven from Heaven for a sin of fornication or adultery or robbery; but pride cast him down into the lowest depths of the abyss." That the sin of the angels was a sin of pride is the common and universal teaching of Fathers and Doctors of the Church.—*H. G. Hughes.*

THE SOULS OF MEN TO REPLACE THE FALLEN ANGELS

How long will the human race endure? How long will sons and daughters continue to be born, and to fill the earth from sea to sea? The answer must be: until every vacancy in heaven is filled up. That is to say, until the number of human beings who are saved and sanctified equals the number of the fallen angels.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

Thy tale complete of Saints Thou dost provide
To fill the thrones which angels lost through pride!

—*Cardinal Newman.*

INVOCATION OF THE ANGELS PROVED FROM SCRIPTURE

Their intercession is to be invoked, because they always see God, and most willingly undertake the advocacy of our salvation assigned to them. Of this invocation, there exist testimonies of Sacred Scripture; for Jacob entreats, nay, compels the angel with whom he had wrestled, to bless him, declaring that he would not let him go until he had received his blessing (Gen. xxii, 24, *sq.*, Osee, xii, 4); nor did he implore the blessing of the angel only whom he saw, but also of him whom he saw not: "The angel," says he, "that delivereth me from all evils, bless these boys" (Gen. xlviii, 16).

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

GUARDIAN ANGELS

To angels is committed by the Providence of God the office to guard the human race, and be ready at hand with every man to protect him from any serious harm. For as parents, if their children have occasion to travel a dangerous way, infested by robbers, appoint persons to guard and assist them in case of attack, so has our Heavenly Father placed over each of us, in this our journey towards our heavenly country, angels, protected by whose aid and diligence we might escape the snares secretly prepared by our enemies, repel their horrible attacks on us, and proceed directly on our journey, secured by their guidance against the devious wandering into which our treacherous foe might withdraw us from the way that leads to Heaven.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

He hath given His Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.—In their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.—Ps. XC, 11, 12.

The Angel of the Lord shall encamp round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them.—Ps. XXXIII, 8.

HOW OUR GUARDIAN ANGELS BENEFIT US

The advantage derived from this special care and Providence of God over men, the functions and administration of which are intrusted to angels, whose nature occupies an intermediate place between God and man, is evident from the examples which the Sacred Scriptures supply in abundance, and which testify that, by the Divine goodness, it has come to pass that angels have frequently wrought wondrous things in the sight of men: by which we are admonished that innumerable like important services are rendered us invisibly by angels, the guardians of our safety and salvation. The angel Raphael, who was appointed by God the companion and guide of Tobias (Tob. v, 15, 20; xii, 3), conducted him, and brought him back safe; assisted to save him from being devoured by an enormous fish, and pointed out to him the singular virtue of its liver, gall and heart (*ibid.* vi, 2, *sqq.*), expelled the demon, and, by fettering and binding up his power, preserved Tobias from harm (*ibid.* viii, 3); taught the young man the true and legitimate rights and use of marriage (*ibid.* vi, 17, *sqq.*); and restored to the elder Tobias the use of his sight (*ibid.* xi, 8, 15).—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL OF THE DYING MAN

St. Francis Regis had a deep devotion to the holy angels. He never passed a church without saluting the guardian angels of that church; and when he saw someone coming to confession, he always besought the angel guardian of that person to obtain for him the grace of true repentance. One day, passing down a street, he was suddenly stopped by someone. He looked round to see who it might be, but there was no one near him. He tried again to move forward, but he found it impossible. At that moment a window above his head was opened, and he heard a voice of one calling for a priest to attend a dying person. He at once ascended to the room, and, having heard

the sick man's confession, he anointed him, and the poor man died in sentiments of great piety. St. Francis attributed this to the intervention of the guardian angel of the dying man.

MINDFULNESS OF OUR GUARDIAN ANGEL KEEPS US FROM SIN

One of the Fathers of the Desert, being asked one day why he was never angry and always so charitable, answered: "I always keep in mind the presence of my guardian angel, who is at my side and assists me in all my wants, who whispers into my soul what I ought to say and what God wishes me to do, and who writes down the manner in which I have performed each one of my actions. This thought fills me with so much respect for him that I am always careful never to say or do anything that may displease him."

CONFIDENCE IN THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

Blessed Jane of Orvieto had a great respect for her angel guardian, and placed entire confidence in his protection. When she was very young she lost both her parents. This was a heavy blow for the affectionate child; but her mother had taught her ever to confide in the care of her guardian angel, and this gave her consolation in her deep sorrow. A pious lady one day said to her: "My child, how can you bear so courageously your terrible loss?" The child showed her a little picture of a guardian angel her mother had given her, and answered: "Do you not know that my good angel has taken the place of my dear father and mother, and loves me even more than they could? Why, then, should I give way to sadness?"

THE FALLEN ANGELS

Do we believe in the devil? The truth of the existence around us of an active army of evil spirits, constantly striving by their attacks to kill the life of grace in our souls, is in danger of being forgotten through neglect. No doubt the doctrine of the devil's existence and power has been tinged with legendary superstition where it has not been distorted by exaggeration; no doubt, in pagan lands devil-worship, with its attendant vices, reigns in its most debased and degrading form, but all this is no valid reason why we should refuse to accept the Scriptural teaching about the nature of our spiritual warfare, corroborated as it is by the testimony of our own conscious experience, any more than the thousand gods of false mythology should make us give up belief in the one true God?—*W. R. Carson.*

CHAPTER III

MAN; THE SOUL; IMMORTALITY; ETERNITY; THE LAST THINGS

GOD AND MAN

Man himself is a great deep, of whose very hairs, O Lord, Thou keepest an account, and not one is wanting in Thee, and yet his hairs are more easily numbered than his affections and the motions of his heart.—*St. Augustine.*

The Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth.—Gen. II, 17.

They are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the Resurrection.—Luke XX, 36.

THE NATURE OF MAN

Not only are masters and servants equal before God, but also in the plane of nature. This the great Shakespeare had in view when he put these words in the mouth of Hamlet, touching Cæsar the conqueror of nations:

Imperial Cæsar dead and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away,
Oh, that this earth which kept the world in awe
Should patch a wall t' expel the winter's flaw.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

Glorious, indeed, will be the springtime of the Resurrection, when, all that seemed dry and withered will bud forth and blossom. The glory of Lebanon will be given it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; the fir tree for the thorn, the myrtle tree for the briar; and the mountains and the hills shall break forth, before us, in singing. Who would miss being of that company?—*Cardinal Newman.*

The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the Voice of the Son of God.—And they that have done good things shall come forth unto the Resurrection of Life: and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of Judgment.—John V, 28, 29.

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the Last Day I shall rise out of the earth.—And I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God.—Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another: this my hope is laid up in my bosom.—Job XIX, 25, 27.

THE FUTURE LIFE OF THE BODY

We shall meet again, are words most frequently uttered, even by

the irreligious and the unbelieving, when the minutes of life may be numbered and the soul is shortly about to take its departure. But if it is the soul only with which, at some future time, we are to be brought again into contact, the idea of meeting is shorn of half its significance, and deprived of most of the consolation which it undoubtedly affords both to the mourner and the dying. The poet was voicing one of the truest instincts we have when he exclaimed: "Oh! for the touch of the vanished hand, for the sound of the voice that is still."—*John Freeland.*

It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption.—It is sown in dishonour, it shall rise in glory. It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power.—It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body.—I *Cor.* XV, 42, 44.

One is the glory of the sun, another the glory of the moon, and another the glory of the stars.—For star differeth from star in Glory. So also is the Resurrection of the dead.—I *Cor.* XV, 41, 42.

We will not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful even as others who have no hope.—For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them who have slept through Jesus, God will bring with Him.
—I *Thess.* IV, 12, 13.

THE FEEBLENESS AND THE POWER OF MAN

When man contemplates nature in its glorious majesty, the thousands of brilliant stars, that whirl in unlimited space, that glorious light, destined to illuminate the world, as a mighty torch; the oceans, filling the air with the bellowing of their waves; that earth, finally, that seems to him so vast and yet is nothing but a dark speck in the universe; and when from this impressive sight he turns his attention to himself, this first look is, indeed, calculated to abash him. For what is he amidst this immensity but a shadow that passes? Yet, this immense world knows not itself; man knows it. He is but a feeble rod, but a conscious and thinking rod.—*Pascal.*

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?

It is quite true that from time to time we do get bored with the preacher who is for ever harping on the baseness of this wicked world and the bliss of the future Heaven. We have even heard of the church warden who, when challenged, declared he was quite ready for eternal happiness but would rather not talk of such distressing subjects. Nevertheless, sooner or later, we must come face to face with this question: "What is the meaning of all this world, and where, I wonder, do I come in?"—*Thomas F. Gerrard.*

LIFE AND ETERNITY

It is in eternity that our real lives shall be spent. This world has no lasting interest for us. We are only pilgrims, strangers staying here for a night—the broad day of our real existence is to be spent in Eternity. Shall we then compare this life to Eternity? No, we cannot. What is the length of the largest life compared with

the length of eternity? An instant, a second, that flies by and is forgotten. What are the pains or pleasures of this life compared with the pains or pleasures of eternity? So utterly insignificant that they will not bear comparison. There is no sorrow in this world so great that the mind may not rise superior to it. And however bitter yesterday, its pains are forgotten to-day. But the pains of hell are so overwhelming, that it is only the power of God that can support the victims of His anger, and the pains of hell are never ending. They who have once become the victim of God's justice shall never know His mercy.—*P. A. Sheehan.*

LIFE INSIGNIFICANT

Take any great city, such as London, Paris, New York, or Boston. Where are now the multitudes that formed their teeming populations but one short century ago? An individual here and there, a great politician, a famous writer, a scientist or a philosopher may, perhaps, still survive the effects of "time's effacing fingers." Their names, and just a fact or two concerning them, may linger yet in the memory of the living. But soon even their very names will be forgotten, and oblivion will claim them as her own. Of the innumbered millions of ordinary labourers, servants, artisans, professional men, and others, is there so much as one that we know anything about? Is there a single individual among the masses of the people of that far-off period, whose name we could mention, whose life we could describe, or whose career is of the slightest interest to anyone amongst us? No! So far as the present generation is concerned they are as though they never had been. So will it be with us. We may be of some importance now. We may exercise some slight influence over our immediate friends and acquaintances; and affect in some degree our own generation, but our names shall scarcely reach down to another.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

LOSS AND GAIN

One of the early martyrs said to his persecutors as they were leading him to death: "You take a life from me that I cannot keep, and bestow a life upon me that I cannot lose."

SUFFER IN THIS LIFE RATHER THAN IN THE OTHER

Burn, cut, spare not, in this life, that Thou mayest spare for eternity.—*St. Augustine.*

THE IMPORTANCE OF SALVATION

The salvation of a soul is so important, that in order to procure it we should expose not only our property, but our life.

—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

OUR ETERNAL SALVATION OUR MOST IMPORTANT BUSINESS

The business for which we struggle is eternity. There is the question of eternity: there is the question whether we shall be saved, and be forever happy in a city of delights; or be damned and confined for eternity in a pit of fire.—*St. Eucharius.*

THE CITY OF THE WORLD AND THE CITY OF GOD

A twofold love divides mankind into the City of the World and the City of God. Man's self-love and his self-exaltation pushed to the contempt of God constitute the City of the World; but the love of God pushed to contempt of self is the foundation of the City of God.—*St. Augustine.*

THE SOUL

THE SOUL

Our soul is a spirit. It has an activity of its own, in which the body does not partake. Therefore it has a being, an existence of its own, which does not share the destiny of the body. The soul can act without the body; it can be and live without it. Whatever destroys the life of the body, does not destroy the soul; for they are not one, but separable. And when that great catastrophe comes, which involves the body in ruin and death, the soul, having its own life, is not implicated in this ruin, but survives. The death of the body does not reach the soul. When the body decays the soul retrenches itself into its inner world, into itself. Nor will it die when once separated from the body; for, being simple, it can not be dissolved. We have no instance of annihilation in the world; death is not annihilation but dissolution of the whole into its parts. And since the soul has no parts, it can not be dissolved; it can not be rent asunder; it can not be decomposed; it can not die. And therefore we sum up our first point in the words of Holy Scripture: "God made man incorruptible" (Wisd. ii, 23).—*Charles Bruehl.*

SOUL AND BODY

Faith teaches us that man is the personal union of a material body and of a spiritual, free, responsible, and consequently immortal soul. Beyond that body, with its exquisite beauty of form, its delicate texture, its lythe movement, its noble bearing, and its wonderful mechanism, all of which can be seen and handled, there is a something which sense can not reach. The voice, the manner, the expression are but the outward manifestations of a something always and necessarily invisible. The delicately wielded scalpel of the anatomist can not detect it in the folds of any human brain; the psychologist's exhaustive analysis of human thought can not draw it into the light. Underlying face and form, speech and action; underlying all that is most private and subtle, is that around which all else is gathered and without which all else would never have been or would cease to be.

Man is a being made up of soul and body. He is in the root of his being a person. He is that which each of us means when he says: "I." He is, or has within the outward form of his body, a personal spirit, or, as Scripture terms it, a being "made to the image and likeness of God." The carefully trained horse or dog may carry instinct forward to the very confines of reason, but it is only a specimen of its kind and it does not reflect that it is itself which lives, it has no consciousness of a personal existence.—*J. W. Sullivan.*

THE SOUL INCAPABLE OF CORRUPTION

It has been clearly demonstrated by psychologists that the soul is a simple or indivisible substance; spiritual in its nature; and not intrinsically dependent on the body for its existence, or even for its action. Now, such a substance is incapable of corruption, either directly or indirectly. It is obviously incapable of corruption directly, since it is not made up of distinct parts, and can not therefore be resolved into anything else, as, for instance, water may be resolved into two gases. But it is likewise incapable of corruption or distribution even indirectly, for it does not intrinsically depend on the body for its being, as the whiteness of the snow-flakes depends upon the snow, and must vanish as soon as the particle in which it adheres is melted by the warmth. Hence the human soul can not come to an end in either of these ways.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

WITHOUT IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL LIFE A FEARFUL DISORDER

Without the immortality of the soul human life would be a puzzle, nay, more, the wild discoherent dream of a maniac. Whereas we discover an admirable order and harmony in the material universe, there is chaos, jarring discord in the moral world. In the former everything is well balanced according to measure and weight; in the latter everything runs riot. The sinner outwits the honest; justice is persecuted; the good designs of the pious are thwarted, not only by wicked men, but by adverse circumstances, as if Heaven had foresworn their cause; innocence is hunted down, captured, slandered and starved into submission by knaves; virtue is barely permitted to exist; it is scorned and ekes out a wretched, ignominious existence. Righteousness succumbs, vice triumphs; the pious shed bitter tears and the wicked smile in the broad light of day. This man, though he works and toils day after day, struggles in vain against poverty and sees the pinched faces of his little ones wane. Next door, however, lives a prosperous scoundrel enjoying splendid health, commanding the esteem of his fellowmen and gorging himself with ill-gotten goods. Here is the debauched, whose health does not fail despite his revelries; there lives a sober, temperate man, who drags through life a diseased body.

Why? Why is this? Who can explain this horrible chaos? Indeed, we must say, if there is no immortality, there is nothing to relieve this fearful disorder.—*Charles Bruehl.*

INFLUENCE OF THE BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY

Voltaire, the most frivolous mocker of everything holy, had many a glimpse of the truth. One night his friends visiting him railed at religion, especially at the immortality of the soul, when he interrupted their discourse, saying: "Friends, restrain your tongues, lest my servants hear you. I do not wish to be dispatched this night."

THE SEED OF IMMORTALITY IS IN OUR HEARTS

A man who had lost his faith saw a Sister of Mercy. She was young and beautiful and had forsaken a wealthy and comfortable home. Touched at this spectacle the unbeliever asked her: "Dear Sister, would you not be cruelly deceived if there were no life here-

after?" The sister replied, and there was a reflection of Heaven on her face: "I do not understand what you mean; I possess and enjoy this coming happiness already in this life." Truly, it lies at the bottom of our hearts, this hope or fear of immortality; the consoling or dreadful certainty of an after life.—*Charles Bruehl.*

IMMORTALITY OF LIFE AND LOVE

Here is a son, a good and dutiful boy, kneeling at the deathbed of his mother. Her life is fast ebbing away; he watches the love-light fade in her eyes. He rises and bends over her face. For the last time she gives him a kind and loving look and then a sigh; she has passed away. Tell that boy: "Your mother is no more; all that remains is but this lifeless form: her soul was but vapour; it has vanished." And then for a moment he will forget his loss, a fierce anger at your frivolity will boil in his heart and he will shout at you: "She lives. She loves. She will forever live and love. That glorious wealth of love in her soul will never die. And I know, those kind eyes will once more beam on me again and her soul will hover around her boy." That is the instinct of nature. And that instinct is true.—*Charles Bruehl.*

AN EMPEROR'S SOUL

Otto, Emperor of Germany, on one occasion, while on his way to Rome, passed near the dwelling-place of a hermit named Nilus, known throughout the country for his holiness of life. The emperor having called on Nilus, and having been treated hospitably, said to him before leaving: "Nilus, ask of me a favour, and I will joyfully grant it." "All I ask," replied the Saint, "is that you save your soul; for although you are an emperor, you, like other men, must die and be judged. Therefore, have a care for your eternal welfare." Otto withdrew, but he never forgot the hermit's advice, and finally died a holy death.

THE VALUE OF A SOUL

Horace Mann (Non-Cath.) once made an address at the founding of a reformatory, and during his remarks he said that its existence was justified if it saved a single soul. After the address a man came to him and said: "You, surely, do not mean that. All this expenditure of means and energy would be too much, if we were to accomplish the salvation of only one boy." Horace Mann replied: "It would not be, if it were my boy." The estimate of the value of a soul must be made by love. Consider, then, how God values the least of His children, He who loves them with an infinite love.

St. Francis Xavier was one day sent for by a poor Indian to baptize his child, who was dying. The Saint went immediately, and baptized the child. It died soon afterwards. When he saw that the child was dead, he raised his eyes to Heaven, and broke forth into a hymn of joy. The people wondered when they saw this, and asked him why he was filled with joy, when those around him wept with sorrow. He said: "Many and painful have been the journeys I have undertaken since I came to India. This day I am sufficiently rewarded

for them all, because I have been able to clothe this soul with grace, and to send one child more into Heaven to glorify God."

THE SOUL IN THE STATE OF GRACE AND IN THE STATE OF SIN

A certain painter once met a little girl of such surpassing beauty that he sought permission to paint her picture, and under this picture he wrote "Heaven." Years had gone by, when the same artist happened to be in a court room and saw a dissolute woman dragged before the judge. The appearance of this woman was so repulsive and the unmistakable marks of vice and crime made her face so wicked and hideous, that he made a sketch of her and wrote under it "Hell", as a contrast to the other picture. The dissolute woman had observed the artist's scrutiny and she found an opportunity to tell him that she was the girl whom he painted years ago on account of her great beauty. The artist was shocked to see the destruction that vice and dissipation had wrought in the fair creature he had so greatly admired. The two pictures represent the soul in the state of grace, and made repulsive and hideous by mortal sin.

ETERNITY

THE IMPULSE TOWARDS ETERNAL LIFE

The duration of our mortal life, however long it be, however energetic and successful, never satisfies the craving for life. No man's cup of life is ever full. Whether he has lived for pleasure, or for usefulness, for business, for possessions, or for God, he can never feel that his faculties are exhausted; the weakness and impotence of age come upon him like an external and hostile force that crushes his powers by violence. There is an unconquerable life in him, which revolts against his physical decay, and even his mental decay. He may be unable to exercise any of his powers, but there is something in him which tells him that he has not arrived at the final natural term of existence, and that his destiny is not fully accomplished. The wish to live longer, to do more, is evidence that all is not exhausted in the most decrepid, worn-out man; the existence of a craving is proof that an object exists for it. No man who has ever lived is like a forest tree, which has flourished for centuries, putting forth and shedding its verdure year by year, working its chemical action on the air, contributing its share of fertility to the soil, and at last falling to earth through decay, and giving back every particle of its substance to mix with the earth and support other forms of life. The tree has expended the whole of its forces; all it has received in the way of moisture and sunshine has produced its full effect on the substance of the tree, and then upon the earth and atmosphere. But in man a residue of force survives all his action; an impulse towards life remains, which has never yet found adequate employment on any created object; and that residue of vital force is greater than all the force he has expended in life, it is in a manner infinite; it is the principal force or impulse with which he has been endowed, although he may make but little account of it, it is the impulse towards eternal life in God.—*Bishop Bellord.*

A PROTESTANT POET'S LONGING AFTER ETERNAL LIFE

Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human breath
Has ever truly longed for death;
O life, not death, for which we pant,
More life and fuller that I want.

—*Tennyson.*

ETERNITY

What then is this eternity? It is life without end! Try to realize what that means. As you pass along the road and lanes day by day, you see so many whose faces are well known to you and familiar, and others again whom you meet for the first time and notice so little, that you may be hardly said to notice them at all. Do you ever think that every single one of them, strangers and acquaintances, shall live forever, and that you will see them all again in eternity? When you read in the Holy Scriptures of the victims of God's righteous indignation—the thousands who were swallowed up in the flood—those sinful inhabitants of the accursed cities of the plain, who perished in that pitiless rain of fire; and so many others, whose history is handed down through the long ages as a warning to mankind—do you ever pause to think that they are still alive? Pilate and Judas and the Jewish priests—Herod and his mocking courtiers, the wretch whose sinful hand drove the cruel nails through the sacred Hands and Feet of Jesus Christ!—all, all are living still, and will live forever. And you and I will live forever. We must, must, whether we wish or no, and could we raise the dark veil of the future and look forward through a million years, we should see ourselves still alive and so full of real life and real consciousness that nothing could possiby destroy it, save the Almighty hand of God.—*Raphael Moss, O. P.*

We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known. —I. *Cor.* XIII, 12.

This is Eternal Life: that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent.—John XVII, 3.

ETERNITY: ITS DURATION

Let us wander down to the seashore, when the tide is out, and contemplate the unnumbered sands. Look to right and to left. See! As far as the eye can reach stretches out the silvery line of sand. Mile after mile it extends, all along the coast of our great country. Now let each tiny grain of sand represent a naught. Having placed our unit "1," we put one grain of sand beside it, and then another, and then another, and another, and yet another, until we have used up all the sands on all the seashores. What period of time would that figure represent? Then grains, representing ten naughts, would stand for ten thousand million years; *i. e.,* 10,000,000,000. Twenty grains, representing twenty naughts, would raise the number to 100,000,000,000,000,000,000 years. Which of you, my dear brethren, can realize a duration such as that? Few of you can even read such

figure, and probably none of you can at all estimate its true value. Yet we are at the very outset of our calculations. We have used up but twenty grains: less than we might pick up by pressing a moistened finger-tip against the sand! If but twenty grains represent a period so wholly and utterly unthinkable, what period would be represented by a shovelful of sand disposed and arranged according to a similar plan? And what period would be represented by a cartload? Here we are already out of our depth, and utterly at sea. Yet what, after all, is one cartload compared to the masses of sand, stretching for hundreds and thousands of miles along countless shores, all the world over? When all these grains, each of which represents a naught, are added one by one to the original figure, then pound the rocks into powder and break up the vast mountain ranges, and having reduced the whole to the consistency of sand, add these grains also to the existing figure, and try to imagine what the sum will be and the duration it represents.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

THE SKEPTIC'S DREAM

A certain doctor who doubted the existence of his soul, and in consequence believed that there was no future life—that all ended with death, one night had a dream: A youth, standing before him in shining garments, questioned him, "Are you asleep or awake?" The doctor answered, "I am asleep." "Can you see me?" the youth continued. A decided "Yes" was the response. "How do you see me?" the visitor inquired, "do you see me with your eyes?" "No," replied the doctor, "I know not how I see you." "Do you hear me?" queried the young man, "do you hear me with your ears?" "Yes, I hear you," was the answer, "but not with my ears. I know not by what means I do hear you." Thereupon the angel, for such the youth was, said to him: "The action of your senses is now suspended, yet you see, hear and speak. A time will come when you will not be able to use these senses of yours, yet seeing, hearing, and speaking will be as easy for you then as it is at the present moment." Then the angel disappeared and the doctor awoke, but from that day he firmly believed in the existence of a future life.—*St. Augustine.*

THE THOUGHT OF ETERNITY

When Ven. Magdalen Dubois was four years old, she was standing at the door of her father's house as a funeral procession was passing by. She asked her nurse what they were doing. "They are carrying the body of a young woman to the grave, because she is dead." "And must I also die?" asked little Magdalen.

"Yes, my child, we must all die, and our souls must go to Heaven, or to Hell, for all eternity." "And how long is eternity? Is it longer than one day?" "Ah! my child, eternity has no end; eternity means for ever and ever."

Magdalen said no more, but from that moment the thought of eternity never left her mind. Sometimes she was heard to say to herself: "An eternity in Heaven, or an eternity in Hell. We must all one day die, and when this life is over there begins one that will never end." Magdalen lived a holy life, and her death was that of the Saints.

DEATH

DEATH, THE MOST IMPORTANT ACT OF OUR LIVES

However little we think of death, it is the most important act of our lives. Upon that one act a whole eternity hinges. Every act of our lives leads up to it. Apart altogether from its consequences, if we had no eyes of faith to see the future, death is such a solemn, dreadful thing, it is wrapped in so much mystery, that the wonder is how men can ever cease to think of it. How can the thought ever die in the minds of men that they will all be called upon to make a change, of whose nature no man knows anything, whose consequences we ourselves must determine?—*P. A. Sheehan.*

Amen, amen I say unto to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die,—Itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.—John XII, 24-25.

By one man sin entered into this world, and by sin, death; and so death passed upon all men in whom all have sinned.—Rom. V, 12.

*While we are in the body we are absent from the Lord.—But we are confident, and have a good will to be absent rather from the body and to be present with the Lord.—*II *Cor.* V, 6, 8.

It is Thou, O Lord, that hast power of life and death. and leadest down to the gates of death, and bringst back again. But it is impossible to escape Thy hand.—Wis. XVI, 13-15.

All flesh shall perish together, and man shall return into ashes.
—Job XXXIV, 15.

By the envy of the devil death came into the world:—And they follow him that are of his side.—Wis. II, 24-25.

EVERY DAY WE DIE

Within us, death is busy. Every day we die, not only because every day we approach nearer the end of our lives, but because every day there is going on within us a decay that is a kind of slow death. Every breath we breathe makes a demand upon our vital powers and decreases their strength. Every exertion we make is so much strength that is spent; we are tired, hungry, thirsty; it is a slow death, a decay that is going on within us, and we have recourse to such artificial means as sleep, food, and drink to stop that decay and renew our exhausted powers. There are few of us, too, that have not at least one friend in the world of spirits. A friend that lived and breathed and walked amongst men, but some one day he grew deaf and dumb and lifeless, and men removed him from among them, and he became invisible to us, and it was all explained by saying that he was dead. And thus this sermon upon death is forever driven into our eyes; yet how few have an active faith or belief in it; how very few live as if they were to die.—*P. A. Sheehan.*

EATH AN ANGEL OF LIGHT

Death is a destroyer. As a weird phantom, a hideous spectre, it asses over the earth, robbing us of our loved ones, sparing neither ge nor sex nor rank. But to believers, to those who hope, who ealize that "Christ hath risen," that "death shall no longer have ominion over Him," it is no longer an angel of destruction, but an ngel of light, setting the captive free, bidding the lame walk, the ind see, the weary to be at rest. Death now only strikes off the risoner's fetters, relieves the captive spirit, aids us to commend ie spirit to the keeping of Him who gave it. Be it ever therefore ur aim in life so to act, that when death comes round, we may calmly ow the head in obedience to God's call, and give up the ghost, *i. e.,* rrender our bodily life, our hearts and its best fruits to Him Who the Father of all, and Who made all things for Himself."

—W. Graham.

God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for e former things are passed away.—Apoc. XXI, 4.

The redeemed of the Lord shall come into Sion with praise, and verlasting Joy shall be upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and adness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.—Is. XXXV, 10.

He was taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding, deceit beguile his soul.—For the bewitching of vanity obscureth ood things, and the wandering of concupiscence overturneth the nocent mind.—Wisd. IV, 11-12.

EATH

It is but crossing with abated breath,
And with set face, a little strip of sea,
To find the loved ones waiting on the shore,
More beautiful, more precious than before.

I can not make it seem a day to dread,
When from this dear country I shall journey out,
To that still dearer country of the dead
And join the lost ones so long dreamt about.

. . . . . .

I never stand above a bier and see
The seal of death set on some well-loved face,
But that I think, "One more to welcome me
When I shall cross the intervening space
Between this land and that one over there,
One more to make the strange "Beyond" seem fair.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox (Non-Cath).

I heard a voice from Heaven saying to me: Write: Blessed are the

dead who die in the Lord. From henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works follow them.
—*Apoc.* XIV, 13.

THE VANITY OF WORLDLY THINGS AT THE MOMENT OF DEATH

Poor worldings! of all the riches which they acquired, of all the pomps which they displayed in this life, what shall they find at death? They have slept their sleep: and all the men of riches have found nothing in their hands. The dream of this present life shall be over at death, and they shall have acquired nothing for eternity. Ask of so many great men of this earth—of the princes and emperors, who, during life, have abounded in riches, honours, and pleasures, and are at this moment in hell—what now remains of all the riches that they possessed in this world? They answer with tears: "Nothing, nothing." And of so many honours enjoyed—of so many past pleasures—of so many pomps and triumphs, what now remains? They answer with howling: "Nothing, nothing."—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

WILLINGLY ACCEPTING DEATH

He that offers to God his death makes an act of love most perfect that is possible for him to perform; because, by cheerfully embracing death to please God, at the time and in the manner which God ordains, he becomes like the martyrs, the entire merit of whose martyrdom consisted in suffering and dying to please God.
—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.—And if to live in the flesh, this is the fruit of labour, and what I shall choose I know not.—But I am straitened between two, having a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.—*Philipp.* I, 21-23.

THE UNCERTAINTY OF DEATH

On the 15th of August, 1824, Father Papillon was preaching a sermon in presence of a large and appreciative audience in the Chapel of the French Embassy in London. He was eloquently discoursing on the value of time, and how it should be employed in the service of the Creator, who has given to every one his allotted span to be used in arriving at the end of our creation—the eternal beatitude of heaven. He had just said the words, "How precious is the time of our life, because we never know what moment the Almighty shall summon us before His dread tribunal to give an account of all our actions," when he himself was suddenly called by death before that same tribunal of judgment that he was warning others to prepare for.

PREPARATION FOR DEATH

Why dost thou not provide for thyself against the day of judgment, when no man can be excused or defended by another, but every one shall have enough to do to answer for himself?—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE THOUGHT OF DEATH

In all things look to thy end, and how thou shalt be able to stand before a severe Judge, to whom nothing is hidden; who takes no

ribes, nor receives excuses, but will judge that which is just. O most wretched and foolish sinner, what answer wilt thou make to God, who knows all thy sins; thou who sometimes art afraid of the looks of an angry man?—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE CHRISTIAN'S DEATH

Christ has risen and death's terrors flee before Him. Of the Christian who faces death in the calm spirit of his Master, it can be truly said, in the words of a Protestant poet, that,

". . . . dying not as a coward that dies
And dares not look in death's dim eyes,
Straight as the stars on seas and skies,
Whence moon and sun recoil and rise,
He looked on life and death and slept."

—*A. Swinburne.*

TWO DEATHS

The earth saw two deaths, one of them supremely happy and the other supremely sorrowful. The eyes of the chaste, sinless Joseph were closed by the hands of Jesus, and Mary was kneeling at his side. His death was supremely happy; he is therefore the patron of a happy deathbed. I may add that a Saint has told that the efficacy of his intercession is only second to that of Mary. The other death was supremely sorrowful; and the same sword that pierced Jesus pierced the Mother of Sorrows that stood by the foot of the Cross.

—*P. A. Sheehan.*

THE SIGHT OF A DEAD BODY

The queen of Spain had died far away from Madrid, and Duke Francis Borgia was ordered to bring her body with a solemn funeral cortege to the capital. Arrived there, he had to verify before the court the corpse as being that of the late queen. On opening the coffin, what an awful sight met his gaze: the queen's body had not only lost its beauty but was now a mass of corruption, fearful to behold! Francis there and then resolved, at this sight of the end of earthly beauty, riches and honours, to serve God alone, and no longer to seek or care for things earthly. He kept his word and became a great Saint.

WEALTH NO PROTECTION AGAINST DEATH

A wealthy man there was, who erected for himself a magnificent mansion. Many visitors came to see the beautiful edifice, and one day the wealthy man invited a pious hermit to come and see his gorgeous palace. He took the hermit through the beautiful building, and finally asked him what he thought of it. The hermit said: "This is indeed a most beautiful place to live in, but the house has one fault, there is one door too many." Much astonished at this answer the wealthy man asked what door that was, and the hermit replied it was the door through which the owner would one day be carried out dead. The happiness of living in this beautiful house would therefore be of short duration, and, what then?

NO EARTHLY POSSESSIONS AVAIL AT DEATH

A certain powerful ruler in the East, Saladin, lay at the point

of death. Seeing his end approaching, he commanded one of his courtiers to ride through the whole city, bearing on the point of his spear the winding-sheet in which he would so soon be wrapped, and to cry with a loud voice, saying: "This is all that the great Saladin, the terror of his enemies, the mighty potentate of the East, can take with him to the grave, out of all the riches and treasures he possessed."

ONCE WE HAVE DIED WE CANNOT CHANGE OUR WILL

In the next world there are no longer the conditions for a change of will. The night has come when no man can work, probation is over, faith, conflict, victory, merit, do not belong to that sphere. Above all, grace has ceased, and grace is the necessary source of meritorious action. We cannot change our minds, turn to God, call upon His name, without a special influx of suggestion and strength from Him. It is so easy now that we think it depends entirely on a man's own self, and we forget that every such change and repentance is due to a special intervention of God that may well be called miraculous. In the next world this action of God has ceased, and man is utterly unable to initiate such a motion of himself. "He shall not give to God his ransom, or the pprice of the redemption of his soul. He shall labour for ever, and shall live to the end" (Ps. xlviii, 8-10).—*Bishop Bellord.*

WHO ARE THE BETTER OFF?

Some men are punished only in this world, others in the other world, others here *and* there. Who are the better off?—*St. Theresa.*

THE BUSINESS OF DYING BETTER UNDERSTOOD BY CATHOLICS

Oliver Wendell Holmes (Non-Cath.), being asked his opinion as a physician on the effect of religious beliefs on the minds of the dying, made this curious reply: "So far as I have observed persons nearing the end of life, the Roman Catholics understand the business of dying better than Protestants. I have seen a good many Roman Catholics on their dying beds, and it always appeared to me that they accepted the inevitable with the composure which showed that their belief, whether or not the best to live by, was a *better one to die by* than most of the harder ones that have replaced it."

HEROIC DEATHS OF CATHOLIC SISTERS

An anonymous Protestant minister, wishing to eulogize five Catholic Sisters who had died of the plague in China, wrote some touching verses in which he first alluded to the bravery of soldiers dying "hero deaths for God and Fatherland," and added:

> "We call them brave! But brave, ah! braver still,
> Those gentle Sisters in the plague-strick'n ward
> Who nursed each other, though they knew no skill
> Could save their lives, the fever once begun,
> And fell at duty's call, one after one.
> We call them brave! With God is their reward."

THE DEAD SOON FORGOTTEN

Trust not in thy friends and kinsfolk, nor put off the welfare of

ıy soul to hereafter; for men will sooner forget thee than thou naginest. It is better now to provide in time, and send some good efore thee, than to trust to others helping thee after thy death.

—*Thomas à Kempis.*

OPE AND FEAR IN THINKING OF OUR DEAD

A combination of hope and fear is the ordinary Catholic sentiment hen we think of our dead. A want of hope would cause despondency nd depression; we read of the Emperor Henry III. that in spite f many works of piety and charity he was always melancholy, beause he feared that his father was in hell, in consequence of the any sins of simony he had committed in the appointment of bishops. want of hope also paralyzes our active charity toward our deceased riends and brethren. This is also the case when, on the contrary, eople indiscriminately canonize all those that have passed away; or, if they are in Heaven, they do not need our prayers. Do these pparently charitable friends realize that in praising their departed ey not only show indifference, but real unkindness, for they do not ssist those who, in the words of Job, appeal to them: "Have pity on e, have pity on me, at least you my friends, because the hand of e Lord has touched me" (Job xix, 21). How different is the titude of those who understand the meaning of the writer of our xt: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead."

—*Lambert Nolle, O. S. B.*

CTION—AND FACT—ABOUT THE DEAD

At last the inevitable hour is come. He dies—he dies quietly—his iends are satisfied about him. They return thanks that God has ken him, has released him from the troubles of life and the pains sickness; "a good father," they say "a good neighbour," "sincerely mented," "lamented by a large circle of friends." Perhaps they add, lying with a firm trust in the mercy of God;"—nay, he has need of mething beyond mercy, he has need of some attribute which is consistent with perfection, and which is not, cannot be, in the ll-glorious, All-holy God;—"with a trust," forsooth, "in the promes of the Gospel," which never were his, or were early forfeited. nd then, as time travels on, every now and then is heard some ssing remembrance of him, respectful or tender; but he all the hile (in spite of this false world, and though its children will not ve it so, and exclaim, and protest, and are indignant when so lemn a truth is hinted at), he is lifting up his eyes, being in torent, and lies "buried in hell."—*Cardinal Newman.*

IE CARE OF THE DEAD

No doubt the care of the dead must be second in importance to the re of the living. While the Christian is *in via* there is question his salvation or damnation. The Church's action must have for object, to secure for him, the one thing necessary. When he is *termino* that question is decided, and the business of the Church to hasten his beatitude, to alleviate and abridge his sufferings, and treat with honour his mortal remains. This is, of course, of much

less importance than placing him while living in a state of grace, but yet it holds a large and prominent place in the ministrations of religion.—*Bishop Moriarty.*

CREMATION

Cremation, in the majority of cases to-day, is knit up with circumstances that make it a public profession of irreligion and materialism. Freemasons first obtained official recognition of this custom from various governments. The Church has opposed from the beginning a practice which has been used chiefly by opponents of the Faith. She is justified by reasons of Christian charity and the interests of humanity. It is unseemly that the human body, once the living temple of God, the instrument of heavenly virtue, sanctified so often by the Sacraments, should finally be subjected to a treatment that filial piety, fraternal and conjugal love, or even mere friendship, seems to revolt against as inhuman. Another argument against cremation, and drawn from medico-legal sources, lies in this that cremation destroys all signs of violence or traces of poison, and makes examination impossible; whereas a judicial autopsy is always possible after exhumation, even after some months.—*Catholic Encyclopedia.*

THE JUDGMENT

AFTER DEATH: THE JUDGMENT

"After death, the judgment" (Heb. ix, 27). Here at least it might be thought that there is no room for mercy. The time of trial and grace will be over. We pass from life straight to the tribunal of God, and according to our state then will be our eternal lot. All have reason to fear that day when God "will search Jerusalem with lamps" (Soph. i, 12), when He will "judge justices," and find much to reject or punish even in what we have accounted our good deeds. There will be a terrible account to render for those who have been most favoured by God with knowledge and grace. Yet the judgment will be a great revelation of Divine mercy, too. Then we shall see how wonderful is God's goodness to those who seemed to be hardly dealt with, how He compensates them for the ignorance and want of grace in which He let them live, what large allowance He makes for their goodwill and the disadvantages which they could not help. Our Lord frequently indicates this in the Gospels, as when He tells of many not visibly of the kingdom of God here, who will yet come from the east and the west to the eternal kingdom, while its children will be cast out. There will be leniency in His dealing with Sodom and Gomorrha as compared with those who had the privilege of seeing the Messiah in the flesh; and there will be consideration for those who knew not the will of their Lord, which many who know it will not receive. Cardinal de Lugo says that many will be accounted as Christians who, in ordinary parlance, are not Christians. The great day of the Lord will be as much a revelation of unsuspected mercies as of His rigid justice.—*Bishop Bellord.*

We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every

one may receive the proper things of the body according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil.—II *Cor.* V, 10.

The Lord will reward me according to my justice, and will repay me according to the cleanness of my hands:—Because I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not done wickedly against my God.
—*Ps.* XVII, 21-22.

OUR FINAL CHOICE MADE LONG BEFORE DEATH

It seems to me that most men are judged in this world long before the hour of death. That God does not wait until that hour, when the senses are numbed and the faculties torpid, to propose to the Christian soul the alternative of Heaven and hell. But that He comes to us when we are in the full possession of our faculties and asks us to make our final choice between Himself and everything that is not He. He takes no unfair advantage of us. He offers Himself to us only when we can make a deliberate choice of Him, and although in His mercy He sometimes accepts at the last moment the poor wretched remnants of a life that has been spent in the service of His enemy, and of a love that has been wasted upon the world, this is not His rule. It is the exception.—*P. A. Sheehan.*

THE JUDGMENT—A MIRROR

The judgment of God may be compared to a mirror. It is not the mirror's fault if the face it reflects is hideous.—*St. Jerome.*

JUDGES OF THIS WORLD AND THE ETERNAL JUDGE

Have you ever considered the fear and terror of a culprit standing before even a mere earthly judge? When a murderer has been caught red-handed, and brought before the magistrate, his whole courage fails. Though it is but a human judge, a man like himself, and though the very worst penalty he can inflict is the shortening of a life, which must, *in any case,* terminate in a few years, yet the unhappy criminal trembles with terror. At the sight of this human official, standing up, and solemnly pronouncing the sentence of death, how often even the most hardened offender has been known to faint away and to fall back trembling into the hands of his jailers. If such be the condition of one in presence of a mere man, invested with a brief authority, who shall describe the condition of a sinner in the presence of the Infinite and Omnipotent God.
—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

JUSTICE AND MERCY

Terrible is the judgment of God if He judges according to His justice, even *more* terrible if He judges according to His mercy.
—*St. Theresa.*

THE LAST JUDGMENT

So important, indeed, does the Church deem reflection on the great fact of the last Judgment, that, to call men's attention to it she begins and ends the liturgical year by reading for the Gospel of the day the portion of Holy Writ wherein are described the signs that precede, and attend, the second coming of the Son of God, in judgment. Now this is not a vague shadowy far-off event, that

concerns only the world at large; but an intensely personal one, since the doom of the whole does but register the fate of each. What we say of the general Judgment applies to the judgment that awaits each singly.—*W. Graham.*

He hath appointed a day wherein He will judge the world in equity by the Man Whom He hath appointed, giving faith to all by raising Him up from the dead.—Acts XVII, 31.

And then shall appear the Sign of the Son of man in Heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of Heaven with much Power and Majesty. —And He shall send His Angels with a trumpet and a great voice, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them.
—*Matt.* XXIV, 31-32.

When the Son of man shall come in His Majesty, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the seat of His Majesty:— And all nations shall be gathered together before Him, and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats:—And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left.—Matt. XXV, 31-33.

I will gather together all nations, and will bring them down into the Valley of Josaphat: and I will plead with them there for My people, and for My inheritance Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and have parted My Land.—Joel III, 3, 2.

As the lightning cometh out of the east, and appeareth even into the west: so shall also the Coming of the Son of man be.—But of that day and hour no one knoweth, no, not the angels of Heaven, but the Father alone.—Matt. XXIV, 27-28.

But the Day of the Lord shall come as a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with great violence, and the elements shall be melted with heat, and the earth and the works which are in it shall be burnt up.—II *Peter,* III, 10.

The Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels: and then will He render to every man according to his works.—Matt. XVI, 27.

They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of Heaven with much Power and Majesty.—Matt. XXIV, 30.

COME! DEPART!

"Come! Depart!" These are the words with which that tremendous spectacle in the valley of Josaphat will end. "Come! Depart!" —with which everything that God has said, taught, proclaimed, all the actions of mankind, will be finished. "Come! Depart!" These are the words upon which depend salvation or perdition, Heaven

or hell. "Come! Depart!" "Come, ye blessed of My Father, into heaven!" "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!" This is the final sentence which will be uttered, and either the one or the other will infallibly befall every man.—*P. Hehei, S. J.*

Then He shall say to them also that shall be on His left hand: Depart from Me, you cursed, into Everlasting Fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.—For I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink.
—*Matt.* XXV, 41-42.

Then shall the just stand with great constancy against those that have afflicted them.—These seeing it, shall be troubled with terrible fear.—Saying within themselves, repenting, and groaning for anguish of spirit: These are they, whom we had some time in derision, and for a parable of reproach.—Wisd. V, 1-3.

When sudden calamity shall fall on you, and destruction, as a tempest, shall be at hand: when tribulation and distress shall come upon you:—Then shall they call upon Me, and I will not hear: they shall rise in the morning, and shall not find Me:—Because they have hated instruction, and received not the fear of the Lord.—Nor consented to My counsel, but despised all My reproof.—Prov. I, 29-30.

I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you.—John XVI, 22.

We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honour.—Behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the Saints.—Wisd. V, 4-5.

TERRORS OF THE LAST DAY

Terror will follow upon terror, curse upon curse, "till men will faint away with fear." The sun being not quite extinguished, a dismal gloom will be spread over all things, like a veil over the face of the dead: terrific signs are seen in the heavens, and all things announce that time is at an end. St. John says that before God pronounces the final word there is silence in Heaven: and voices are heard in the air, on the water, and on the earth. At length the skies open, and He pours out the first vial of His anger. And the end is come. God speaks the command, and all nature trembles as if in agony. The seas swell and boil, and rise and touch the skies. The mountains nod and sink, and the poles collapse. The lightnings flash, and the moaning tempests sweep over the furious deep, piling up ocean upon ocean on the trembling globe. The earth reels in convulsion, and the whole frame of creation struggles. A mighty conflagration bursts from the melting earth, rages like a hurricane round about, devouring all things in its storm and flood of fire, consuming the crumbling wreck of the condemned world. The heavens become terrible as the kindling earth and seas show their overwhelming flashes on the crimson skies. The sun muffled, the moon black, the stars fallen, floating masses like clouds of blood sweep the skies in circling fury. With what impressive terror does

the Saviour paint this scene in His own words: "Men fainting away with fear, running in wild distraction, calling on the ground to open and swallow them, and the rocks to fall on them and hide them from the face of the Lord." The earth on fire, the skies faded, the sun and stars darkened or extinguished: mankind burning, dying: the angry voice of God coming to judge the world, are realities which the history of God has never seen before, and which never again will be repeated during the endless round of eternity.—*Cahill.*

False prophets shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive (if possible) even the elect.—*Matt.* XXIV, 24.

Unless those days had been shortened, no flesh should be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be shortened.
—*Matt.* XXIV, 22.

FEAR OF THE JUDGMENT

St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, being very sick, sent in haste for her confessor. "Father," she exclaimed, "I have been thinking about the terrible Judgment of God; I am frightened. Do you think that I will be saved?" Unhesitatingly the good priest answered: "I have the fullest confidence that Heaven will be your home. Why are you fretting?" "God's judgments are so different from ours," she said, "and the time is coming soon when I shall stand alone before my Judge, to be examined on everything I have said or done in my whole life."

St. Augustine declared that nothing banished from him earthly thoughts so effectually as the fear of judgment.

In the days of St. Bernard there lived a holy monk called Stephen. He had spent a long life in the service of God, and everyone looked up to him as to a living Saint. The time had come when the holy man was to receive the reward of the many labours he had accomplished in the service of Jesus Christ, and to pass from the poor and humble state he had chosen, to go to His eternal home in Heaven. Then the abbots of his Order came to be present to witness his happy death, and to aid him with their prayers. When he was in his agony, they were speaking of the holy life he had led, and how happy must he now be, at the thought of having done so much good to the Church of God: how full of hope and confidence he must be of a happy judgment from Jesus Christ, whom he had served so well. At these words, which the dying monk overheard, he roused himself, and collecting all his strength, said: "My brethren, I go to the judgment-seat of God with as much fear as if I had never done any good at all. For if, by the help of Jesus Christ, some little good may have been done through me, I am afraid that I may not have done all that was required of me, and that I did not correspond with the graces of God as I ought to have done."

One say St. Rose was full of sadness as she thought that she might not persevere to the end, and that one day she might be condemned to hell for ever. In her distress Jesus appeared to her,

and said: "My daughter, what makes you so sad, and why do you allow these thoughts to trouble you? Do you not know that I will never condemn to hell any but those who wish to be condemned?" as if to say: If a person is condemned it is his own fault, for if he had only asked Me for the grace of perseverance he would have obtained it.

CONVERTED BY A PICTURE OF THE LAST JUDGMENT

Bogaris, King of Bulgaria, greatly enjoyed awe-inspiring sensations. The pictures and sculptures of his palace represented most frightful subjects. When he heard that a certain monk named Jerome was an excellent painter, he paid him a visit and begged him to paint a picture to suit his taste, that is to say, the most frightful that he could imagine. Father Jerome granted his request and painted for him the Last Judgment. In this picture the Divine Judge was seen seated upon a cloud surrounded by His angels, in a majestic and awe-inspiring manner. On the right were to be seen the just, radiant with glory, on the left the sinners, terror-stricken and fearful of the last sentence of the Judge. Below, the devils were depicted in hideous and frightful forms. Below these again there appeared an abyss, from which burst vicious flames. The pagan king was delighted with the picture, and declared he had never seen anything so impressive and awful. However, as he did not know what the picture represented, he asked the monk to come and explain it. Father Jerome explained it with such earnestness that the king was even more impressed with the explanation than with the picture. He became a Christian, and led a life so penetrated with the thought of God's judgment that whenever he was about to undertake anything, or when affairs were discussed in council, it was his custom to say: "Let us remember that that which we are now going to do, will be scrutinized at the Divine Judgment."

—P. Hehel, S. J.

Peter of Arezzo was one who feared neither God nor man. If anyone spoke to him of the punishments of sin, or of the Last Judgment, he only laughed at him. One day he went to see a great picture in a church in Rome. It was a picture of the Last Judgment. He looked at it for a long time in silence, and then turned away. People wondered where he was going so silently, and watched him. They saw him kneel down to say his prayers. The sight of the picture had changed his heart. He said, "If I am so frightened by the sight of a picture of God's judgment, what will become of me when that judgment itself comes?"

A DREAM OF THE JUDGMENT

St. Vincent Ferrer relates that a certain young man had a dream, in which he imagined he was brought before the tribunal of God to be judged. So terrible was the scene he witnessed—the majesty of the Sovereign Judge, the questions put to him to which he could make no satisfactory reply—that on his awakening in the morning he found himself trembling with agitation and covered with a cold sweat. His first thought was to thank Jesus Christ that it had not

been a reality, but only a dream. But at the same time he said to himself: "What I have seen in my dream will one day be a reality; I cannot escape it; perhaps, too, it may be soon, even this very day." He asked God to forgive him the sins of his past life, and took the resolution to lead, from that hour, a life of penance, and rather to die than ever again to commit a mortal sin.

PREPARATION FOR THE JUDGMENT

Among the Saints of the Middle Ages there is none better known than St. Elizabeth of Hungary. The people used to call her the "dear St. Elizabeth," because she was so charitable to the poor, and was so kind to all who were in affliction. Of all the works of charity she performed, that of visiting the sick and the poor was the one she loved most. The ladies of her household, who did not care for this kind of work, tried to persuade her that it was beneath the dignity of her position to perform such things. Elizabeth answered, "I am preparing for the Day of Judgment. On that day Jesus will ask me for an account of the good works I have done for Him, and I desire to be able to say to Him, 'You see, O Lord, when You were hungry, I gave You to eat; when You were thirsty, I gave You to drink; when You were naked, I clothed You; when You were sick, I visited You; because You said that in doing these things to the poor, I did them for Yourself. I beseech You be indulgent, therefore, to me in the sentence You are to pass upon me.'"

JUDGE NOT, THAT YOU MAY NOT BE JUDGED

A monk, lying on his deathbed, appeared so cheerful and joyous that the abbot of the monastery wondered exceedingly. "How is this?" he asked the dying man. "In all probability you will soon be summoned before the judgment seat of God, and yet you are so light-hearted!" "Father," replied the monk, "whenever my brethren have annoyed me or wronged me in any way, I have made it a practice to put the best possible construction on their words and actions. Now, since I have never judged others uncharitably, I venture to hope that I may find mercy in the presence of my Divine Judge."—*F. Reuter.*

THE THOUGHT OF DEATH AND JUDGMENT

The great St. Francis of Sales tried to inspire those around him with that confidence in God that burned in his own breast. One day a gentleman came to him in great distress. The thought of death and of the judgment of God had thrown him into the lowest depths of sadness and despondency, and he went to him for consolation. "Alas! my friend," replied the Saint, "there is no torment so great as this one; I know it well, for I myself had to endure it for the space of six weeks, and I am well able from experience to speak on this matter. Let me tell you, then, that if anyone has the earnest desire to serve Our Lord, he should noways be tormented by the thought of death and judgment; or if we must needs have some fear of them, let it be a fear mingled with confidence. God is our Father, and His love for us is boundless; and has He not told us

that those who hope in Him shall never be confounded? So, my son, keep before your mind what St. Paul says of those who love God: 'There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.'"

PURGATORY

THE FIRE OF PURGATORY

St. Thomas, the prince of theologians, tells us that those confined in Purgatory suffer from the same fire as the damned in hell. It is one and the same flame, he argues, that torments the lost and that cleanses the saved. The light faults and imperfections and venial offences with which a soul enters Purgatory, may be burnt away by this fierce devouring element, and the soul, at last, cleansed, mounts at once, all pure, to Heaven. But the mortal sins and grievous crimes that stain the souls of the damned, are too deeply engrained in the very substance of the soul ever to be cleansed or burnt away, though eternity itself be employed in the process: hence, they must remain for ever in the bottomless pit. This is clearly implied in the passage of St. Paul, Epistle to the Corinthians, where he writes: "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day (of eternity) shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide . . . he shall receive a reward."—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

I consider that this transitory fire is more insupportable than all the afflictions of this earth; for as the unjust, so also will the just be tormented by this fire, only with this difference, that the purifying will not endure eternally—*St. Gregory.*

The least suffering of a poor soul is greater than the most intense agony we can think of here.—*St. Anselm.*

The Lord also hath taken away thy sin; thou shalt not die.—Nevertheless, because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, for this thing the child that is born to thee shall surely die.—II *Kings* XII, 13-14.

THE SOUL KNOWS NOT THE LENGTH OF ITS STAY IN PURGATORY

The agony is intensified by the fact that no soul knows how long it will have to endure its sufferings. As soon as it is separated from the body, all desires for earthly possessions vanish, as well as all those things which were the delight of the body. The soul knows only one aspiration, only one ardent desire, and that is the longing for God, who alone can satisfy, whilst everything that surrounded it has perished. What a torment it is to be irresistibly impelled by this perpetual longing, when it beholds itself so far removed from Him who alone can content it. Look at the sick man! Violent pains rack him, sleep is banished from his pillow, he knows no rest; he rolls from one side to the other, every moment seems to him an hour, and he is continually asking those about him if it is not yet day. O, how often will the suffering souls ask their guardian angels this

same question, when will the hour of my deliverance come? How long must I still remain here? Alas! no one answers! They only know this: that the greater the number of sins the longer will they have to remain in the fire of purification.—*P. Hehel, S.J.*

The most valiant Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves from sin, forasmuch as they saw before their eyes what had happened, because of the sins of those that were slain.—And making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the Resurrection.—(For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead.)—And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them.—It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins.—II *Mach.* XII, 42-46.

I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the Day of Judgment.—He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world, nor in the world to come.—*Matt.* XII, 36-32.

CONSOLATIONS OF PURGATORY

Oh, how solemn and subduing is the thought of that holy kingdom, that realm of pain. There is no cry, no murmur; all is silent, silent as Jesus before His enemies. We shall never know how we really love Mary, till we look up to her out of those deeps, those vales of dread mysterious fire. O beautiful region of the Church of God! O lovely troop of the flock of Mary! What a scene is presented to our eyes when we gaze upon that consecrated empire of sinlessness, and yet of keenest suffering! There is the beauty of those immaculate souls, and then the loveliness, yea, the worshipfulness of their patience, the majesty of their gifts, the dignity of their solemn and chaste sufferings, the eloquence of their silence; the moonlight of Mary's throne, lighting up their land of pain and speechless expectation; the silver-winged angels voyaging through the deeps of that mysterious realm; and above all, that unseen Face of Jesus, which is so well remembered that it seems to be almost seen!—*Power.*

THE SOULS IN PURGATORY TO BE ENVIED

Father Faber was accustomed to say that he could never understand why we speak of the poor souls in Purgatory. He thought them rich indeed, much to be envied, little to be pitied. They are indeed truly rich, because they are certain of possessing God forever. Compared with us, living as we do in dreadful uncertainty about our salvation, they are to be envied exceedingly. And yet it is also true that they are deserving of our sympathy and pity. They are poor because they are suffering, and the promise of the future scarcely relieves their anguish in the present.

THE SUFFERING IN PURGATORY

If there were in the whole world but a single loaf of bread, the

mere sight of which was destined to appease the hunger of all creatures, and if a man who had that desire to eat which is natural to all of us in a normal state of health, yet could not satisfy it, and yet though deprived of all food could neither die nor fall sick, is it not clear that he would suffer a hunger that was always increasing? Suppose this man to know the single loaf in question could alone by his seeing it satisfy him, and that without it he would remain in his hunger in a state of intolerable torture, is it not evident that the nearer he came to that loaf without being able to look upon it the more would his hunger be provoked and that his torments would be all the more cruel in proportion as his appetite yearned with greater force for the sight of the loaf, the single object of his desire? And again, if in the midst of this torture of hunger devouring him always more and more as time went on, this man were to acquire the dreadful certainty that he was never again to see that loaf, what would take place? He would at once feel the beginning of hell within himself: he would from that moment be as are the souls of the damned who have lost all hope of seeing the Bread of Life, God their Saviour. Well, then, the hunger which this man would feel is precisely that which the souls in Purgatory experience, with the exception of the despair—for they have the hope that they shall one day see that loaf and satisfy themselves with it as they will. But the hunger and martyrdom which they suffer are something which can not be described as long as it is not given them to fill themselves with the Bread of Life, which is Jesus Christ the true God, our Saviour and our Love.—*St. Catherine of Genoa.*

A certain holy nun received a letter which informed her that her father was dead. He had not only been a good Christian, but was spoken of as a living Saint, so great was his piety. His daughter, knowing how strict are the judgments of God, for a long time offered up fervent prayers and pious works for the repose of his soul. At last she ceased praying for him, because she thought he must be in Heaven, and that it was needless to pray for him any longer. But how great was her astonishment when Our Lord one day showed her in Purgatory the soul of her beloved father, suffering excruciating torments, and imploring her help. "O my daughter, pray for me, and do not forget your father who loved you so tenderly." At this sight she burst into tears, and, casting herself at the feet of Jesus, she besought Him through His most Precious Blood to free her father from his sufferings; or if it was necessary for someone to bear the punishment, she offered herself in his stead. Our Lord was pleased to accept the offering she made. Her father's soul was immediately set free from Purgatory, but heavy indeed were the crosses and sufferings she had to bear from that day till the end of her life.

St. Catherine of Bologna was once permitted by God to see the souls who were suffering in Purgatory. First she saw a raging fire, which burnt even to the inmost soul; it seemed to her as if the flames of hell could not burn more fiercely. Then she saw a countless number of people, all burning in these terrible flames. She saw there

many who had led holy lives on earth, but who were not yet pure enough to be with God. She also saw there many little children who had never committed great sins, but only venial ones, such as quarrelling with brothers and sisters, or disobeying their parents in small matters, and the pain she saw them suffering for these sins in those flames was awful to look upon. God permitted her to see these things that she might warn us to avoid even the smallest sins, since God punishes them with much severity in the next life.

THE SUFFERING OF THIS WORLD AND THE SUFFERING OF PURGATORY

There was once a man who suffered great pains for a whole year, without a moment's relief. At the end of that time he prayed to God to take him out of this world, that he might be released from his terrible sufferings. God heard his prayer, and sent an angel to offer him his choice—to take three days in Purgatory, or to endure for another year in this world the same pain as he was suffering.

The man said within himself, "I know that the sufferings of Purgatory are most severe, but they cannot be much more so than those I am suffering now; and besides, three days will soon pass by, and then they shall be over. O my God," he said, "I choose the three days in Purgatory." His request was granted; he died, and his soul entered Purgatory. He had not been many moments there when his guardian angel came to visit him.

"O angel of God," cried out that suffering soul, "why have you deceived me? Why have you left me so many years here, when God said my punishment was to end after three days?" "But," the angel answered, "you have only just died; you are here but a few hours and why do you speak about years?"

"O holy angel," said the soul, "give me my choice again, and I will go back to the world, and suffer gladly for another year all the pains of my former sickness, rather than remain another instant in this awful place."

Again his prayer was heard, and he returned to the world. For another year he suffered as he had previously. But to everyone who came to see him he said: "Oh! accept willingly all the sufferings God sends you in this world, and offer them up in satisfaction for your sins, for the greatest of these sufferings is as nothing when compared with the sufferings in Purgatory."—*Turlot.*

PURGATORY

. . . . Praise to His Name!
The eager spirit has darted from my hold,
And, with the intemperate energy of love,
Flies to the dear feet of Emmanuel;
But, ere it reach them, the keen sanctity,
Which with its effluence, like a glory, clothes
And circles round the Crucified, has serged,
And scorched, and shrivelled it; and now it lies
Passive and still before the awful Throne.
A happy, suffering soul! For it is safe,
Consumed, yet quickened, by the glance of God.

—*Cardinal Newman.*

ST. MONICA AND PURGATORY

For she, when the day of her dissolution was at hand, had no thought for the sumptuous covering of her body, or the embalming of it, nor had she any desire of a fine monument, nor was solicitous about her sepulchre in her own country. None of these things did she recommend to us, but only desired that we should make a remembrance of her at the altar, at which she had constantly attended without one day's intermission; from whence she knew was dispensed that holy Victim by which was cancelled that handwriting which was against us (Coloss. ii.) by which that enemy was triumphed over who reckoneth up our sins, and seeketh what he may lay to our charge, but findeth nothing in Him through whom we conquer.

—*St. Augustine.*

MASSES AND PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD

Now it is the universal custom of the Church to have many Masses said for the dead, even for individual souls. One Mass is of infinite value, sufficient in itself to free any soul from Purgatory. We do not, however, content ourselves with having only one Mass said. It may be that God chooses to apply one Mass to one soul and another to another. We cannot depend on our own judgment in the matter: we must follow the practice of the Church. So also with our prayers for the dead. It may be that our first prayer for a departed friend opens the gate of Heaven for him. But we do not know. The number of the elect has been purposely kept concealed from us. It is part of the mystery of the Communion of Saints. The uncertainty is a motive to make us persevere in prayer for the dead. The prayer may not necessarily be applied to the person named in our prayer. But it will not be lost. It will be applied to some soul which, perhaps, needs it more. It will serve the function, too, of putting us in closer union with the spirit world.

—*Thomas F. Gerrard.*

THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS AVAILABLE FOR THE POOR SOULS

Such is the efficacy of this sacrifice, that it is profitable not only to the celebrant and communicant, but also to all the faithful, whether living with us on earth, or already numbered with those who are dead in the Lord, but whose sins have not yet been fully expiated; or, according to Apostolic tradition the most authentic, it is not less available when offered for them, than when offered for the sins of the living, their punishments, satisfactions, calamities, and difficulties of every sort.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

PRAYERS FOR THE POOR SOULS

Cardinal Baronius relates that there was once a holy man lying in the agonies of death, whom the devil was tempting with thoughts of despair. During the whole course of his life this man had done much for the repose of the holy souls in Purgatory. In the midst of the darkness, he suddenly saw thousands of heavenly spirits, clad in shining armour, fighting in his defence against the Evil One. "Who are you, O blessed beings, who thus defend me?" "We are those souls," was the answer, "whom by your prayers, penances,

and Masses you have released from Purgatory, and we have come to conduct you to Heaven."

WE DO SO LITTLE FOR THE POOR SOULS

And then we follow the souls of our friends into eternity. From the judgment seat we follow them into their prison, where their angel conducts them, and our prayers, as it were, rain down incessantly on those fires. We pray for them at our public services; we pray for them at our private devotions; we pray for them even at our meals; there is scarcely a day in which the Holy Sacrifice is not offered for these suffering souls; there are many in the Church who have given to God all the merits of their lives, their prayers, fastings, almsdeeds for the souls in Purgatory; there are religious Orders in the Church who repeat frequently during the day the De Profundis for the departed. And with all this, dear brethren, if we consider how great are the sufferings of these poor souls, we shall see how really uncharitable we are and how unreasonable it is that we do so very little.—*P. A. Sheehan.*

A PROTESTANT POET'S PRAYER

Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.

—*Tennyson.*

A PROTESTANT MINISTER'S OPINION OF PURGATORY

Rev. H. Page Dyer, of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Philadelphia, delivered a sermon on April 27, 1913, saying in part: "Almost everybody believes there is a Heaven, but there is a diversity of thought as to when the saved shall reach there. Of course, it is evident that the bodies of all the saved will be reunited to their souls at the time of the resurrection, for not until then will they have risen from their graves. But what about the entrance of the souls into Heaven? The Protestant belief is that every soul that does not go to hell goes to Heaven at the moment of death. One difficulty about this is that it takes no account of the quality or character of a man's mode of life. A man whose life has been so low and bestial that he barely escapes damnation, according to this theory, goes as surely and quickly to Heaven as a man who has lived a careful, holy and beautiful life." Dr. Dyer then gave our Catholic belief—and evidently his: "The ancient belief of God's Church is one of holy common sense. Few souls are so pure that they are fit for Heaven, where nothing that is defiled may enter. And yet there are many millions of people who are too good to go to hell."

HEAVEN

THE HAPPINESS OF HEAVEN

Is it not altogether unreasonable to suppose that the Infinite Intelligence, Beauty and Love could fail to satisfy the aspirations and longings of our minds and hearts? As well say that we could

exhaust the ocean by drinking its waters, as dream of exhausting the treasures of eternal happiness that God has prepared for us.

It is perfectly true that pleasure produces satiety in this life, but that can readily be accounted for. Sinful pleasure eventually causes disgust and ennui, for our hearts were made for something higher and nobler; intellectual pleasure is often so exacting in its demands that it wearies us exceedingly, just as the body becomes fatigued from too much physical exercise.

But in Heaven no unhappiness is possible, because sin, the origin of it, is absolutely banished. "There shall not enter into it anything defiled" (Apoc. xxi, 27). No weariness or ennui is possible, because God gives us the sustaining help of His own infinite power and love. All the desires of mind and will and heart will be eternally gratified. Why, then, question simply because we can not form an adequate concept of the manner in which God will satisfy them?—*Bertrand L. Conway, C. S. P.*

Thus saith the Lord: Let thy voice cease from weeping, and thine eyes from tears, for there is a reward for thy work.
—*Jer.* XXXI, 16.

They shall no more hunger nor thirst, neither shall the sun fall on them, nor any heat.—For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the Throne, shall rule them, and shall lead them to the Fountains of the Waters of Life, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.
—*Apoc.* VII, 16-17.

They shall rejoice before Thee, as they that rejoice in the harvest, as conquerors rejoice after taking a prey, when they divide the spoils.
—*Is.* IX, 3.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field, which a man having found hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.—Matt. XIII, 44.

The work of justice shall be peace, and the service of justice quietness, and security for ever.—And My people shall sit in the Beauty of peace, and in the Tabernacles of confidence, and in wealthy Rest.
—*Is.* XXXII, 17-18.

I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them joyful after their sorrow.—Jer. XXXI, 13.

THE BEAUTIFUL CITY

One day there came to Philip of Macedonia a man called Demades; he was one of the chief magistrates of the city of Athens. "I have often heard of your good city," said the king, "and I have been told that it is exceedingly beautiful." "My lord," answered Demades, "you have been told the truth; but no one can describe the greatness and beauty of our city, except one who has seen it, and even *his* words could never convey to your mind what it really is." Philip urged him to give him a description of it, and Demades gave an

account of its rise and progress, and of the greatness it had reached. He spoke of the wealth of its inhabitants, and the beauty of its buildings, and the renown it had obtained for learning, and how people from all parts of the world went thither to visit it.

The king listened in silence to the account of Demades. When he had finished, he said: "That city *must* be mine, cost what it may. I will risk everything I have to make that city mine."

There is a city far more beautiful than Athens. That city is Heaven. It is to be given to us for ever, if we love and serve God faithfully. Say to yourself what Philip of Macedonia said: "That city shall be mine, cost what it may; I will spare no pains that I may gain it."

They that are redeemed by the Lord, shall return, and shall come into Sion singing praises, and Joy Everlasting shall be upon their heads, they shall obtain joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning shall flee away.—Is. LI, 11.

Therefore they are before the Throne of God, and they serve Him day and night in His Temple: and He, that sitteth on the Throne, shall dwell over them.—Apoc. VII, 15.

In My Father's House there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you, because I go to prepare a place for you.—John XIV, 2.

Thou hast made known to me the ways of life, Thou shalt fill me with joy with Thy countenance: at Thy right hand are delights even to the end.—Ps. XV, 11.

HAPPINESS IN THE WORLD OR HAPPINESS IN HEAVEN

It is difficult, even impossible to enjoy perfect happiness both here and in Heaven. He who seeks his happiness in things of the world forfeits his happiness in Heaven.—*St. Jerome.*

THE INEXPRESSIBLE GLORY OF HEAVEN

One day God was pleased to give to St. Catherine of Sienna a little glimpse of the glory of Heaven which He would one day bestow on her, and on all those who would be faithful to Him while they dwelt in this world. When the vision was over, she went down to the other nuns in the convent; but her face was so bright that they could scarcely look upon it. They knew that she must have had a vision, and they asked her to tell them what she had seen. "O," she exclaimed, "I have seen such wonderful things—such wonderful things!" But she could say no more. When her confessor heard about it, he asked her to tell him more plainly what God had been pleased to show her. "Father," she answered, "it is quite impossible for me to tell you what I saw: no human tongue could express, no words could describe the beauty of the heavenly things God showed me—the reward which He will give to everyone who serves and loves Him in this world. Oh! it is beautiful beyond all that can be imagined."

WHAT A SAINT HEARD IN HEAVEN

Jesus Christ one day gave St. Mechtildis a view of the glory of Heaven. As she was gazing on it in rapture and wishing that the happy day were come when she also would enjoy the happiness of the Saints, she heard a voice that seemed to come from the immense multitude of the blessed, saying, "O thrice happy are you who still live in the world, because it is in your power to increase your glory and your merit for ever." "Oh!" cried out the Saint, "if men did but know how much they might increase their merit every day, they would never awaken in the morning without their hearts being filled with gratitude to God for His goodness in giving them another day in which they might increase their glory for Heaven, their eternal home. This thought alone ought to be sufficient to strengthen them in all their difficulties and trials, and to give them courage to lead a mortified life, since each one of these things is of so much avail for them in eternity."

Could we but see the infinite rewards bestowed in Heaven in return for the good works done in this world, we should devote all our faculties, our intellect, memory and will, solely to their accomplishment, however much it might cost us.—*St. Catherine of Genoa.*

HELL

THE ETERNITY OF PUNISHMENT

The eternity of future punishment is not an unreasonable doctrine; on the contrary, the unreasonable thing would be to suppose that the punishment of unrepented sin in the next world could be only temporary. The universal teaching of experience from nature is that law is vindictive and implacable, and that repentance is no reparation for disobedience. Vengeance follows every transgression of natural laws, even if they be violated only through mistake or ignorance. One act often brings a life-long punishment which no repentance will undo. The forgiveness of sin on repentance is the one exception to this law. The law of grace overrides the ordinary law of nature; and the special intervention of God in the Incarnation and Passion introduces a new force that counteracts the necessary effects of sin.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

SIN A PERMANENT STATE, THEREFORE PUNISHMENT PERMANENT

To understand the eternity of sin, we must remember that the transient act is not all there is in sin. Those who deny the eternity of hell wish to see in sin only an isolated action which at once is over and done with. But sin is a permanent state of the soul following on a sinful act. We see only the momentary act; human justice punishes that alone, and only so far as it is carried into external effect. God sees not only the act, but the enduring alienation of the soul from Him, and its state of disorder, which is hostile to the Divine Nature, and which is deliberately persisted in. The effect endures while the cause does. It is this permanent state of adhesion to sin which is punished by an eternal hell. There is, therefore, no unjust excess of punishment over guilt in hell. In duration as well as in

its pains, hell is exactly adequate to sin. It is intimately connected with sin as its direct cause. Hell is sin; and for that very reason is necessarily adequate to it, and is necessarily eternal—*Bishop Bellord.*

Let death come upon them and let them go down alive into Hell. For there is wickedness in their dwellings: in the midst of them.
—*Ps.* LIV, 16.

THE ETERNITY OF HELL

In hell there is no calendar; there the years are not counted. St. Antonius says, that if a damned soul heard that it was to be released from hell after so many millions of years as there are drops of water in the sea, or grains of sand in earth, it would feel a greater joy than a criminal condemned to death would experience at hearing that he was reprieved and was to be made the monarch of the whole world! But, no! as many millions of years shall pass away as there are drops of water in the ocean, or grains of dust in the earth, and the hell of the damned shall still be at its commencement.—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

THE REDEMPTION MEANINGLESS UNLESS THERE IS A HELL

The infinite Redemption wrought by Jesus Christ is reduced to nothing if sin be not an infinite evil leading to an eternal hell. The mystery of the Atonement and the Incarnation of God the Son would have no adequate reason to explain them else; and they would come to be regarded as unreal and untrue.—*Bishop Bellord.*

AN ATHEIST'S UNCERTAINTY

Some one said to Voltaire, "I am now finally convinced that there is no hell." He answered, "You are very happy. I am far from that, to my great sorrow."

THE DENIAL OF HELL

To deny hell is to misunderstand and underrate the power that free-will has of resisting God. If there be no hell man cannot finally reject God, there is no such thing as obstinacy in sin or final impenitence, there is no force in inveterate habits. There are two alternatives: either God forces the impenitent and resisting soul into an unmeritorious love of Him and crushes free-will: or the soul repents in the next world and goes again through a course of supernatural training for Heaven. In this case all these passages of Scripture and doctrines and exhortation crumble away, which treat this life as the time of probation and insist on the importance of using the present life well.—*Bishop Bellord.*

DENIAL OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

The present age has gone beyond all those that are past, in denying the existence of hell. Hitherto the voice of the Church, the voice of Scripture, the voice of nature, reason, and conscience, have convinced even the most lawless sects that an eternal punishment awaits the violation of eternal laws. But now, various causes have combined to lead most of those who are outside the Catholic Church to reject this most important truth. Pride of intellect and spiritual

ignorance, the tendency to rebellion and moral corruption, have created a new spirit of the age, which has set itself resolutely in opposition to this doctrine. Against it have been marshaled all the forces of sophistry, ridicule, misrepresentation. The attack has been most vigorously conducted with so much success outside the one true Church of Christ, that its leaders boast of having forever delivered mankind (*i. e.*, certain sections of some communities), from "an appalling burthen of cruelty and terror."—*Bishop Bellord.*

Many may rejoice in the spread of incredulity about hell and think it a victory over religion and God, but in reality it is one of the severest punishments of men's sins. They have despised the light of truth, and it is becoming obscured and lost to them. This is the immediate consequence of their worldliness, pride, and sensuality; and the consequence of sin is also its punishment. The loss of this truth relieves the sinner from the wholesome restraint of fear, it closes in great measure the opening to repentance, it leads to further sins and greater ultimate punishment. An increase of crime follows as a punishment on the denial of hell, and so the denial of hell becomes the surest way of bringing men thither.—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE SUFFERING OF HELL

In the cruel days of the penal laws in England, when every effort was being made to stamp out the Catholic faith, we read of one glorious martyr, a woman, who was slowly crushed to death for sheltering a priest. And we are told how the weights were not laid on her all at once, but one by one, until at length her poor mangled body could endure no more, and she went to receive a martyr's crown. But all human suffering is of this type, given to us gradually moment by moment—whereas in eternity the whole weight is there always—the awful pressure of suffering is ever entire, and yet death can never come.—*Raphael Moss, O. P.*

THE TORMENT OF FIRE

Even in this life the pain of fire is the most terrible of all torments. But St. Augustine says, that in comparison of the fire of hell, the fire of this earth is no more than a picture compared with the reality.

THE FIRE OF HELL

How far the word "Fire" may be literally spoken of hell we have no means of judging. God has made no relevation, the Church has given no definition on the point. We are at liberty to interpret it as may seem best to each. We cannot explain it quite literally of fire such as we have on earth. That is a creation of God, beneficial, cheerful, intended for our use and comfort. The fire of hell has no beneficial qualities, it is not fed with fuel and liable to extinction, but it is lighted and fed by sin and fanned by the breath of God's anger. The Fathers and spiritual writers tell us that earthly fire, however furious, is but a dead, lifeless image compared with the terrible reality of hell. That fire is of such a kind that it can torment spiritual beings, fallen angels and human souls. St. Bernard would

seem to make it wholly immaterial when he says, "Nothing burns in hell except our own self-will."—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE STATE OF THE LOST

A distinguished writer lately dead describes the state of the lost thus: It is "an abiding consciousness of having missed the aim of life, a loss of all that the heart before clung to; an absolute impotence and want of energy, because all the powers of life are withdrawn, and the will is now empty and unfruitful, and only fixed on evil; the constant burning of unsatisfied passions, and the gnawing pain of a conscience which cannot again be laid to sleep."—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE PUNISHMENT OF HELL TEMPERED FOR SOME

As the punishment of hell varies for each one, as the realization of the loss of God depends on previous knowledge and guilt, there will evidently be some on whom the punishment of hell will fall very lightly. There are some, such as unbaptized children, savages, and possibly other adults (Balmez), who are not qualified for the supernatural vision of God, but who have never deliberately averted their will from Him. Such lose God indeed supernaturally, and it is an infinite loss; but no injustice is done to them thereby, for this supernatural possession of God is beyond all claims, requirements, and even beyond the ideas and desires of men in the state of merely natural endowments.—*Bishop Bellord.*

VARIOUS GRADES OF PUNISHMENT IN HELL

We do not belong to the ranks of those profligates, whose whole lives are devoted to outraging religion and morality, who are the declared enemies of God and man. Our destination cannot be the same as theirs. It would be unjustly to place us on the same level with them. Hell with its eternity of terrible torments is altogether out of proportion with our present state, tepid though that state may be. Yet it is no presumption in favour of our salvation that we are not as worthy of hell as the worst sinner. By similar reasoning we should be unfit for Heaven, for we can not think ourselves worthy of that ineffable glory that belongs to the Mother of God, the seraphim, and the highest Saints. But there are varieties of reward and punishment adapted precisely to the character of each individual; for each one is himself the source and measure of his joy or suffering. As star differeth from star in glory, so too is there the widest diversity among the fallen stars. We may not be very bad; but there is place in hell for all classes of criminals. Would not a state of tempered punishment in hell be more accordant with our worthlessness, than any participation, however limited, in the infinite sanctity and glory of the Divinity?—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE "MEA CULPA" OF THE DAMNED

Imagine a man who in his drunkenness sets his house on fire, what his despair will be when with the return of his reason he realizes that through his own fault he has lost everything he possessed, and that he never will be able to gain back what his folly robbed him of. Thus the damned in their fearful suffering will be compelled to

remember that they lost Heaven and are in hell through their own fault.—*St. John of the Cross.*

THE REMORSE OF THE DAMNED

A damned person once appeared to St. Hubert, and said, that two remorses were his most cruel executioners in hell: the thought of the little which was necessary for him to have done in this life to secure his salvation; and the thought of the trifles for which he brought himself to eternal misery.

The thought of having been the cause of their own damnation produces an internal pain, which enters into the very bones of the damned, and prevents them from ever enjoying a moment's repose. Hence, each of them shall be to himself an object of the greatest horror. Each shall suffer the pain threatened by the Lord: I will set thee before thy face. O fool, he will say, that I have been! If I had suffered for God the pains to which I have submitted for the indulgence of my passions—if the labours which I have endured for my own damnation had been borne for my salvation, how happy should I now be!—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

After having eaten the potage of lentils for which he sold his right of primogeniture, Esau was tortured with grief and remorse for what he had lost, and roared out with a great cry. Oh, how great shall be the roaring and howling of the damned, at the thought of having lost, for a few poisonous and momentary pleasures, the everlasting kingdom of paradise, and of being condemned for eternity to a continual death!—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

AN EVIL SPIRIT'S DESCRIPTION OF HELL

A holy priest was once casting the devil out of a man who was possessed, and while he was doing so he said to him: "In the Name of God tell me what are the punishments the wicked suffer in hell?" Satan answered: "The punishments the lost suffer in hell are a continual burning in an abyss of fire, remorse, and despair; but the greatest suffering of all is not to be able to see God, who made them, and whom by their own fault they have lost." "What would you now do to be able to obtain the opportunity of re-entering God's grace?"

"I would willingly suffer all the torments of hell for ten thousand years, if I could only see God for one moment, and if I had a body like you I would be always at His feet begging for mercy. Oh, if men only knew what it is to lose the grace of God!"

I CANNOT BEAR THIS MUCH LONGER!

One day St. Bernard went to see a man who was very ill. He had all his lifetime been negligent in his religious duties, and now, when he was so near the end of his life, he would not hear of returning to God by a sincere repentance. St. Bernard asked God very earnestly to show mercy to this poor sinner. So when he went to see him he sat down at his bedside and began to speak to him about his sickness. "Yes, sir," said the man, as he tossed about

in his bed from the greatness of the pain, "I am indeed suffering awful torments. Oh, I cannot bear this any longer—I cannot bear this any longer! It *must* come to an end soon!" St. Bernard looked with eyes full of pity on the poor sufferer, and the tears began to fall from his eyes. The sick man saw him weeping. "Ah! dear sir," he said, "I see you feel for me! I see you are moved at the sight of what I am suffering. Is not my condition one to be pitied?" "Yes, my poor man, your condition is indeed one to be pitied, but these tears flow from my eyes, not so much on account of the state of your body, but because of the state of your soul. I am thinking that in a very short time, perhaps in a few hours, your poor soul must leave the body, and then be at once cast into hell for ever and ever, because you have not served God on earth. And I imagine that I hear it saying there the same words, 'I cannot bear this much longer!' and yet it shall have to bear for ever and ever torments infinitely greater than those you are now suffering. Poor unfortunate man!" The sick man was much impressed by the truth of these words and at once made his peace with God.

HOW A SAINT CONVERTED A SINNER

St. Lidwina was for thirty-eight years a perfectly helpless sufferer of fearful pains. She became by her patience, and perfect conformity to God's will, a great Saint, and converted many sinners. One day a nobleman, who had lost his faith on account of his wicked life, came to her and in mockery said he was going to make his confession to her. She tried to stop him, but she could not, for she could not move about. So he told her of his horrible sins, even boasting of them. When he got through, he insisted that she should give him a penance. Inspired by God, she asked him: "You have a comfortable bed at home, have you not?" "Yes, my bed is most comfortable." "Your penance is this: when you retire to rest this night, take in your bed the most comfortable position you can find, and then do not stir from it until your usual hour for rising." The nobleman went away laughing at such an easy penance. At night he took what he considered the most comfortable position; but he could not sleep; after a quarter of an hour, he would have liked to move, but did not. After some time, he could bear it no longer, and the thought came to him: "If I cannot bear for a few hours the discomfort of such an easy penance, how shall I be able to bear the horrible pains of hell, for all eternity?" This thought frightened him, and in the morning he went to a priest and made his confession.

—*F. Girardey, C.SS.R.*

THE THOUGHT OF HELL A PROTECTION AGAINST SINNING

If we are always thinking of hell we shall not easily fall into it. For this cause God has threatened punishment, for He would not have done so if there was not great advantage in thinking of it. But because the remembrance of it is effectual for good, He has fixed the menace in our souls as a wholesome medicine. Let us not then neglect the great advantage derived from it, but constantly reflect upon it. . . . But dost thou fear the painfulness of such

words? Dost thou then extinguish hell by keeping silent, or kindle it by speaking of it? Whether thou speakest or not, that fire will fiercely burn. Let it be continually spoken of, that thou mayest never fall into it. It is impossible that a soul anxious about hell should readily sin; for hear that most excellent advice, "Remember thy last end and thou shalt never sin." Let us not remember the kingdom so much as hell, for fear has more power than the promise. I know that many would despise ten thousand blessings if they were not afraid of the punishment. . . . None of those who have hell before their eyes will fall into it; none of those who despise hell will escape it. Those who despise the threat will soon experience the reality. Nothing is so profitable as to discourse about hell; it makes our souls purer than silver. . . . Christ continually discourses about it. For if it pains the hearer, it greatly benefits him. . . . . Let us not then avoid the remembrance of punishment, that so we may escape punishment. . . . Let us then, I beseech you, become watchful. Let us keep hell before our eyes. Let us consider that inexorable account, that, by thinking of these things, we may avoid vice and choose virtue; and that we may be able to obtain the blessings promised to those who love Him, by the grace and living kindness of our Lord.—*St. John Chrysostom.*

Let us now in life descend often into hell, that we may not be obliged to do so after death.—*St. Bernard.*

CHAPTER IV

RELIGION; FAITH; THE CHURCH; SECRET SOCIETIES; SOCIALISM

RELIGION

God approaching to man, and man approaching to God, that is the summary of religion. God approaching to man—this is what the great mysteries of our faith amounts to; this is the truth manifested in the Divine works of creation, the Incarnation, Redemption, Heaven. Man approaching to God—this is the object of our striving in all the acts of religion, in faith, prayer, sacrifice, self-denial, death. This drawing near of God and man is what actually takes place in true religion. God descends from His throne, visits the brilliancy of His glory, and manifests Himself. He appoints conditions for men's approach to Him; then He enters into union with them, becomes their life, their strength, their comfort, and satisfies the desire of His own goodness to be with the children of men.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

MAN MADE FOR GOD

There is no such being as a man devoid of the aptitude for supernatural religion. Every man is made by God and is made for God. Education, heredity, temperament, may place special difficulties in the way, but these are no more entitled to the respectful consideration they generally meet with, than a man's natural inclination toward lying, stealing, or debauchery. God permits these depraved impulses so that we may have matter for a struggle and glory for overcoming. Opportunities of sufficient knowledge are wanting to none. Education, abundance of communication with other minds, the universality of religious practices and worship, the interest and attraction that seem to rise spontaneously for religion, and above all, the grace of Him who "enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world" (John i, 9), all this ensures sufficient guidance to lead every man through darkness to the light.—*Bishop Bellord.*

RELIGION A WANT OF THE SOUL

Religion has no varying and accidental relation to the minds and consciences of mankind. It is one of the essential wants of the soul, answering to its deepest, most spontaneous, and universal cravings. Religion is one of the most prominent facts in the history of humanity, in every stage from barbarism up to the highest refinement. Each element in religion meets a corresponding want in human nature. There is a craving in the human soul for truth, as universal as the craving for bodily nutriment.—*Bishop Bellord.*

NATURAL RELIGION

Human reason alone is able to delineate only the dim outlines of religion. Its light is too dim. It gives twilight glimpses of the

Creator, too fugitive and indefinite to light the way. It gives the broad principles of duty, but its light is not strong enough to discover the detailed application of these. It makes us feel in a general way the necessity of doing God's will, but it does not declare what that will is and how to do it. "The choices of life are definite things, and the rule to guide our choice must also be definite. It can tell us that all vice is to be shunned, but it does not tell us whether this or that particular thing is a vice. Natural religion is a religion of dreams, its doctrines are vague as dreams; like dreams their features are forever changing. It can never rule men; it has never ruled them. It excites more longings in men than it can satisfy. It ever cries for more. It is an alluring voice heard far off through the fog calling to them, 'Follow me,' but it leaves them in the fog to pick their own way out toward it, over rocks and streams and pitfalls which they can but half distinguish, among which they may be killed or crippled and are almost certain to grow bewildered."—*Mallock (Non-Cath.).*

Yet in spite of all possible helps, in what a deplorable muddle do we find men concerning the truths of natural religion! To begin with, they had most deformed notions about the nature of God. Polytheism, dualism and idolatry flourished universally; stars, plants, animals, wooden and metal idols were adored as gods, as is still the case among barbarous tribes. Sanctity or purity was not an attribute of these gods. The most revolting vices and crimes were attributed to them—pride, envy, jealousy, murder, incest, rape. Every human passion was defined and served as a patron to those addicted to such a vice.—*Timothy P. Holland.*

HIGH INTELLECTUAL CULTIVATION OFTEN A HINDRANCE TO RELIGION

High intellectual cultivation besides being unable by itself to raise men to spiritual heights, must often be a hindrance to it; in other words, a highly cultivated man, in seeking after God, may be in a worse condition and less likely to succeed than a man of inferior gifts. This is indeed frequently brought as a reproach against religion, and it may seem that we are admitting too much, and depreciating religion by allowing it. But let us consider it.

It is impossible to raise all the qualities of any man, or any race of men, or of any class of animals or plants, simultaneously to their highest degree. Nature is incapable of the strain of so much perfection. No being can be perfect except God. If the colours of a flower be cultivated there will be some loss elsewhere, perhaps of scent or of size. If fruit is grown for size there will be probably a sacrifice of flavour. Highly bred animals are weak in constitution. What you gain on one side is lost on another. The more perfect a thing is in one quality, the more decided its imperfection on the whole. The eye which has been trained to books and can take in a whole page at a glance, could not track lost cattle through the desert or distinguish a distant sail at sea. A surgeon engaged in delicate operations could not take violent exercise; he must forego strength of muscle if he would keep his steadiness of hand. Excessive bodily exertion makes study impossible, and the highest mental cultivation

is seldom compatible with rude good health. If a man's muscle and endurance are highly developed, it is most likely that his higher faculties will be dwarfed. His physical perfection is inconsistent with his general perfection. He is worse as a man, because of his superiority as an animal. So too, the condition of any exceptional genius is generally abnormal and morbid; he too is less perfect as a man because of his very perfection, and there will be some grave defect in him to counterbalance the immense advantage he possesses over other men. From all of which we may conclude that there is no depreciation of religion in admitting that the highest intellectual cultivation must often be antagonistic to it.—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE INTELLECTUAL IMPEDIMENT TO BELIEF

There is in our minds a natural disposition to distrust any demonstration or line of argument, the result of which leads to consequences which we judge impossible. He who assumes that miracles are impossible, will reject the Gospel as a tissue of impossibilities. Such persons must be reminded that their assumption of the impossibility of miracles is altogether gratuitous, that God has not tied His own hands by the laws which He has made; the Legislator is always free from his own laws, so that He may change or suspend them at His pleasure.—*W. Lockhart.*

NATURAL VIRTUE

Noble-minded disciples of naturalism are parasites of a believing society and would die without it.—*Balfour (Non-Cath.).*

We are ready to admit that a few rare specimens of mankind, in whom nature was more happily compounded, have been able without the teachings of faith to reach remarkable perfection in natural virtue. The "good emperor," Marcus Aurelius, a truly noble-minded man, is pointed out as a pagan saint because of his self-mastery, his love of wisdom and his zeal for virtue; Epictetus, the patient blind slave, by his spirit of resignation to the ills of life, and Seneca, the philosopher, tutor of the Emperor Nero, who, in the midst of corruption and licentiousness, lived an abstemious and frugal life devoted to the search of true wisdom.—*Timothy P. Holland.*

The case of a few naturally good, though irreligious, men is no criterion as to the probable conduct of an entire generation or country without religion. The argument does not extend from them to those others who are not under the influence of early religious associations, who are not restrained by philosophy, refinement, sense of honour and propriety. The infidel multitude are more likely to take the view of that man who, having been restrained by his scientific pursuits and early memories from sinful grossness of life, said in his last days that he was sorry he had taken the trouble to restrain himself and lead a moral life, when he did not acknowledge the religious need of it.—*Bishop Bellord.*

The numerousness of such cases is no disproof of the truth that all men need religion and are called to it by God. It is not incon-

sistent with the general application of that truth, that certain men should remain for a time without being as yet called, or that they should have extinguished in themselves their natural aptitudes. There are some men in whom certain ordinary faculties are almost extinct. Custom and disuse, or disease, may destroy them. So in the lowest depths of the sea and in the subterranean rivers of great caves, fish are found that have no eyes; they have been reduced to this state through countless generations of ancestors whose eyes have gradually withered away through want of use. But they still have the rudiments of eyes, which in the course of time, under ordinary conditions, might become capable of vision. Even those who seem to be without the faculty for religion retain the rudiments of the sense somewhere in their being, and through this remnant grace can work if they are willing, and bring them to the fulness of religion.—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE DISPOSITION FOR BELIEF

But besides those persons who have never considered the question of the Christian religion at all, or who approach the subject with little seriousness, with scarcely any thought of its importance, and without adequate consideration of the arguments on which it rests, there are, no doubt, some to be found, of a very different class. These persons tell us that they have given long and serious attention to the evidences of Christianity, but yet that they are not convinced. Now, it appears that this disposition of mind is the result of one or other of two causes, and sometimes of a combination of the two. One regards a certain moral disposition of the soul, and the other, an intellectual disposition.

First, with regard to the moral disposition. It is certain that our will has a great deal to do with our belief. The prejudices of education, self-interest, and an unwillingness to submit our conduct to the strict rules of the Gospel are quite sufficient to account for the spirit of unbelief; and not wishing to find the Gospel true, but without any conscious dishonesty of purpose, the mind rests upon the apparent difficulties in the evidence, and passes over the great arguments in its favour: and this is nothing more than what we see in the judgments men form on all matters in which human passions are involved, in the different sides men take in politics, and the conflicting opinions they hold concerning the character of great historical personages. In these matters, the opinions they form of persons and principles and even of historical facts, receive a certain colouring from their preconceived views and natural tendencies. Democrat and Republican, Whig and Tory, find it difficult to believe in each other's sincerity. It is rare to find men who take pains of examining with perfect candour the reasons of opponents. In like manner the selfish man will not believe in disinterested heroism, the avaricious man in political integrity, the sensualist in spotless purity.—*W. Lockhart.*

GOD OFFERS TO ALL MEN THE MEANS OF SALVATION

St. Thomas tells us that if a pagan had acted according to his abilities, God would not suffer him to be lost for want of further light, but would send an angel to make him a special revelation of what was necessary. Have they but a vague desire of God, and

truth, and goodness? St. Bridget and Sister Emmerich speak of the tenderness which the Divine Judge will show to the heathen in accepting implicit instead of actual desires. Have some men rejected revealed truths? They will perhaps be simply in the position of uninstructed Catholics, who have never heard of certain doctrines or expressed adhesion to them. Have others hated and oppressed and injured the Church? In some instances our Lord's words may apply to them: "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii, 34). Many by their subsequent conversion and fidelity show that they acted in ignorance; that what they hated was not the Church as she is, but some figment of their imagination, or some creation of calumny which they mistook for her. However imperfect our knowledge may be, we can still see sufficiently well how God has a care for all His creatures; how the means of salvation are to be found in every condition of life; how every man can save his soul if he will; how no one is punished in the next life on account of his ignorance or want of opportunities, and how "in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh justice is acceptable to him" (Acts x, 35.)—*Bishop Bellord.*

REVERENCE TOWARD GOD

But let us not mistake the nature of this godly fear, which we call reverence. All who live under the law stand in awe of its majesty and fear those in whose keeping is its authority. Thus did Mephisbosheth do reverence to David and acknowledge him for his sovereign. Now there are two classes of citizens who fear the law and the custodians thereof: the law-abiding citizen and the law-breaker. They both fear, yet how different is the quality of their fear! You know how and why the good citizen fears the law. He has assisted in its making, is interested in its maintenance, desires its triumph, and would rush to arms and die, if need be, to uphold and defend it. He respects the law, loves it. What he fears about it is that he might, in some moment of supreme folly, forget himself, go counter to its mandates and, falling into its clutches, have to pay the just penalty of his crime. He loves the law because it is good; he respects it because it is just; he fears it because it is strong and he himself is weak. The severity of legal chastisements awes him, but does not cow him, for this very severity is his own protection and security, whose edge he shall not feel unless he comes to deserve it. And he is determined, as far as he is able, not to make himself amenable to the bar of justice.

But the criminal, deliberate in his rebellion against the law, neither respects nor loves it. He simply fears with a servile fear, a slavish dread and terror. He hates it.—*John H. Stapleton.*

THE ORDER OF NATURE AND THE ORDER OF GRACE

Is it conceivable that the characteristic quality which is so prominent in the natural order should be absolutely wanting in the supernatural? Is it conceivable that the beautiful harmony and unity which mark the inferior works of God, should be absent from the most important work of all; that God should have made such complete and regular provision for the secondary means of salvation,

and only the most casual, scanty, and uncertain provision for the primary means of salvation, viz., religious guidance? Is there no analogy between the order of nature and the order of grace? The general truths of nature are certain, the laws of nature are immutable, the duties of life always the same, and they are clearly manifested to us. Would not God's action be inconsistent with itself, if He had left the religious order in the state that some men conceive; in a state of anarchy and lawlessness, uncertainty and discussion, divided against itself, split up into warring fragments, with no fixed criterion of truth, with no authority to command obedience? That is the ideal of the Christian Church according to the majority of non-Catholics. If the same were the Divine ideal, it would utterly falsify the Scripture which saith "God is not the God of dissension but of peace" (I Cor. xiv, 33).—*Bishop Bellord.*

UNITY AND HARMONY NECESSARY IN RELIGION

The disintegrated Christianity that exists outside the Catholic Church can in no sense be called a united and universal kingdom; it does not in any way correspond to prophecy, it is rather a degeneration from than a perfecting of the former system. The progress of the world combines families into tribes, tribes into nations, nations into confederacies, it puts an end to private feuds and civil wars, and tends to discourage wars between nations, it organizes human efforts of every kind throughout the world, and brings all men into closer relations with one another; progress in short promotes union; and the more united society is, the more perfect is it. The perfection of religion must also consist in unity and internal harmony. If it recedes from these, it is on the downward grade to dissolution, it is relapsing into the conditions of bygone barbarous times, it is inferior in character to the former Jewish system which it replaced. If it were not for the existence of the Catholic Church with its broad unity, its great numbers, its harmonious organization, Christianity, as it is outside the Church, would fail to accomplish ancient prophecy, and would be nothing better than a failure.—*Bishop Bellord.*

RELIGION THE STRONGEST MOTIVE

The highest results in the way of good life are attainable only under the influence of true and complete belief in Divine truths. Strong belief in a religion, whether incomplete and true as in the case of the Jews of old, or incomplete and false as in the case of Paganism, Mohammedanism, and Protestantism, has produced greater effects on men's lives than any other motive outside religion. It has engendered by turns a ruthless fanaticism, a violent though temporary enthusiasm, great organizing and subduing forces, great devotion, courage, generosity. Nay, further, there have been a few exceptional cases in those religions of men who, if regarded in some aspects only, and not scrutinized too closely, might almost seem worthy to rank among the Catholic Saints.—*Bishop Bellord.*

RELIGION THE SOURCE OF HIGHEST BEAUTY

The beautiful is one of the great sources of delight to mankind. It is something intangible and indescribable inhering in things; it is

something which is different from their material composition. We cannot analyze it. It is a certain harmony and proportion, variety and unity, which fills us with delight as we contemplate it. Whether we consider a melody, or a series of sounds, a mountain chain, or a problem in mathematics, a poem, a thunderstorm, an invention, there is a something which is the same in all, which appeals to our sense of beauty and gives us exquisite pleasure. It is some gleam of Divine beauty reflected in the creature.

It might be thought that religion has no concern with the science of the beautiful, that it is too austere to bend to such frivolity, and that earthly beauty is rather the material of self-indulgence and sin. Not so. The perception and enjoyment and production of beauty are closely connected with God and religion. Religion is to us the source of the highest beauty as well as of truth and morality. The Scriptures speak of the beauty of Jerusalem, which is the figure of the present Jerusalem, the true Kingdom of God on earth.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

FAITH

THE GIFT OF FAITH

It is a magnificent privilege to be a Catholic. The true Faith is one of the grandest, greatest and most sublime gifts of God to man. It is a gift we can never be sufficiently grateful for, and which we can never value too highly, or, indeed, half highly enough. But, like every gift, it carries great obligations. It makes those who possess it doubly responsible. They have to watch over this inestimable treasure, to cultivate it, to make it bear fruit, to "trade with it," as the Scripture says, not to "bury it in a napkin." We have no warrant to treat it as if it were a charm or a talisman, that will work its marvellous effects of itself and independently of our own personal efforts and cooperation. No, our responsibilities increase and grow in intensity, with every additional grace and favour we receive. "To whom much has been given, of him much shall be required."—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

THE DEFINITION OF DIVINE FAITH

I know that China exists, and India, and Japan. I know that Caesar was a great man, and that he wrote certain books; and that Napoleon was a mighty commander, and was taken prisoner, and died at St. Helena. I know, further, that the earth turns on its axis, and that the succession of summer and winter is caused by the revolution of the earth round the sun. How do I know these, and countless other similar facts? I have acquired them by no personal industry. They all come to me on the testimony of other persons. I accept them without hesitation and without doubt; *but simply and solely upon authority.*

Now, the acceptance of a statement, upon the authority of another, is what is called *faith;* and the character of that faith will vary, with the character and reliability of the authority invoked.

If the authority be human, then faith is simply human faith. If

the authority be Divine, then the faith is Divine faith. Hence, we may define Divine Faith to be *the acceptance of any statements on the authority of God.—Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

UNREASONABLE AND REASONABLE FAITH

A simple servant girl meets a wandering gypsy, who promises to tell her her fortune, if she will but cross her hand with a shilling. She firmly believes her words. Why? Simply because she is old and ugly and has a hooked nose and wears a sugar-loaf hat. In this case the servant girl does, indeed, exercise faith, but it is a most ill-founded and unreasonable faith. It rests on a tottering foundation.

On the other hand; instead of a foolish serving maid, take a prudent man, who lies sick, but wishes to get well. After due inquiry, he calls to his bedside the most learned physician he can find—who has already won for himself a high reputation in his own profession. He not only asks his advice, but he believes his words, puts himself into his hands, and carefully follows out all his directions. In a word, he "exercises faith" in his physician. He believes his words, and acts upon them. This is not an unreasonable, but a most reasonable and proper faith; and though it is merely human faith, its exercise is dictated by prudence and approved by common sense. The foundation here is practically firm and secure.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

Faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not.—Heb. XI, 1.

He that believeth in the Son hath Life Everlasting; but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.—John III, 36.

Take heed that no men seduce you; for many will come in My Name, saying: I am Christ, and they will seduce many.

—*Matt.* XXIV, 4-5.

Without faith it is impossible to please God. For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a Rewarder to them that seek Him.—Heb. XI, 6.

Amen, amen I say unto you, that he who heareth My word, and believeth Him Who sent Me, hath Life Everlasting, and cometh not into judgment, but is passed from death to life.—John V, 24.

As many as received Him, He gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in His Name.—Who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.—John I, 12-13.

Amen, amen, I say to you, you seek Me not because you have seen miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled. —Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for That which endureth unto Life Everlasting, which the Son of man will give

you. For Him hath God, the Father, sealed.—They said therefore unto Him: What shall we do that we may work the works of God? —Jesus answered, and said to them: This is the work of God, that you believe in Him Whom He hath sent.—They said therefore to Him: What sign therefore dost Thou show that we may see, and may believe Thee? what dost Thou work?—Our fathers did eat manna in the desert as it is written: He gave them bread from Heaven to eat.—Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say to you: Moses gave you not bread from Heaven, but My Father giveth you the True Bread from Heaven.—John VI, 26-32.

Every one that heareth these My words and doth them not shall be like a foolish man that built his house upon the sand:—And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall thereof.
—*Matt.* VII, 26-27.

Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father Who is in Heaven.
—*Matt.* XVI, 17.

For our Gospel hath not been unto you in word only, but in power also, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much fulness, as you know what manner of men we have been among you for your sakes.—And you became followers of us, and of the Lord: receiving the Word in much tribulation, with joy of the Holy Ghost.—I. *Thess.* I, 5-6.

FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING

Although no one can believe unless he understands, yet by the very faith with which he believes, he is enlightened to fuller understanding. For there are some things which we do not believe unless we understand them, and others which we do not understand unless we believe. . . . . If wisdom and truth are not desired with all the powers of the soul, they can never be discovered. . . . . By love we ask, by love we seek, by love we knock, by love it is revealed to us, by love, in fine, we persevere in what has been revealed.
—*St. Augustine.*

FAITH THE FOUNDATION OF VIRTUE

A mansion may be a much more magnificent thing, in itself, than the rude foundation on which it rests; yet, without the foundation there can never be a mansion at all. So, in a similar way other virtues may be, and are, sublime and more admirable than faith; yet, without faith they could never exist at all. From this we can readily understand the force of the Apostle's teaching, viz: "without faith, it is impossible to please God."—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

FAITH AND GOOD WORKS

(1) Faith is the principle, the source, the motive of good life. Good life in its highest expression is impossible without faith. (2) Faith, on the other hand, though not exactly impossible without good life, is dead and useless without it. Good works are often

the source and origin of faith; they are the evidence of its life and vigour; they are the nutrition and support of faith. (3) The two things together constitute true religion; they embrace the whole spiritual life of man; they give him here rest and peace, they bring him hereafter to eternal life.—*Bishop Bellord.*

FAITH AND WORKS

Protestants of the sixteenth century taught justification by faith alone, without works. In the absence of confessional controversy, no evangelical Christian would now find fault with the teaching which declares only such faith to be of any worth which shows itself by the love of God and the neighbour.

LOYALTY TO THE FAITH

A certain Catholic had entered the army of the Shah of Persia, and gained his esteem. One day the Shah urged him to give up his religion and turn Mohammedan, saying: "If you do this, I will raise you to the highest rank." The young man replied: "My father died in your service, and I am ready to do likewise. But if you require me to give up my religion, here take this sword and kill me, for I will rather die than apostatize." Struck by the noble answer of the soldier, the Shah praised him for his fidelity to God, and soon raised him to the highest honours in the Persian army.

—*Ferreol Girardey, C.SS.R.*

DISLOYALTY DESPISED

A Catholic young man in Holland applied to a minister of state for a government position. Being asked of what religion he was, he replied he was a Catholic, but added he did not care whether he remained one or not. The Protestant statesman said to him: "I have no appointment for you. You were born and brought up in the grandest institution in the world, and you do not know how to esteem the privilege. I feel sure that a Catholic who does not esteem and love his faith as his greatest treasure, is not fit for the king's service, because he does not know how to serve his God."

—*Ferreol Girardey, C.SS.R.*

THE APOSTASY OF THE WORLD

There is a phenomenon peculiar to the present day, as prominent and as universal as the double fact we have been considering, of the success and the failure of modern progress; and that is the apostasy of the world from God. The times indicated by prophecy seem to have arrived when false prophets shall arise and seduce many; iniquity shall abound, charity grow cold, and many shall depart from the faith, giving heed to doctrines of devils (Matt. xxiv, 12; I. Tim. iv, 1). Religion has been dethroned from the height of esteem and influence which is rightly its own. It is no longer publicly recognized. Whilst in Judaism of old, and in Mohammedanism even at this day, the civil law is rightly made accordant with the religious law, nations that call themselves Christian make no pretense of conforming their acts to the law that Christ laid down. The supernatural destiny of man and the moral law are alike ignored. No one would think for a moment of allowing any weight in public life to the revealed Word

of God. The whole system of religion is treated as a private matter for individuals, a matter of fancy or a lingering superstition. Not only is it set aside, but religion is bitterly attacked. No effort is spared to misrepresent it, to calumniate it, to hold it up to ridicule and not a few countries have exerted their legislative and military force to crush it out of existence. In private life multitudes neglect every form of religious observance, such as prayer, public worship, and the Sacraments; they have substituted wrong for right, and have said to evil, "Be thou my god"; they regard the most atrocious crimes with indifference, or with amusement, or tenderness, or respect. Many popular heroes are men who would be accounted criminals if their misdeeds were less enormous; and the chief objects of detestation and ill treatment are those who love truth and justice as they are in Christ. Thus the life of civilized men has become, in great measure, irreligious and anti-Christian.—*Bishop Bellord.*

LOSS OF FAITH

Some years ago I met a gentleman who was taking his son, a boy of about twelve years of age, to a Catholic College to have him educated. I congratulated him on the wisdom of his choice and the means he was affording the youth of acquiring a sound Catholic education, and I alluded to the dangers to the Faith that lurk in some sectarian institutions of learning. "That," he said, "is exactly the reason why I am taking my boy to a college in which I know his Faith will be safeguarded, for," he added, "I deem the Faith the most precious treasure he can possess and the source of the greatest happiness he can enjoy." "Your sentiments," I remarked, "do credit to your religious convictions." "Religious convictions," he echoed, "father, I have none; I have lost the Faith. When I was my son's age and older, I had the Faith and I had, too, the only joys and blessings life ever afforded me. My parents were unfortunate in the selection of a school for me, it was one in which religion was depised. I thought the correct thing for a young man was to profess himself emancipated from such a superstition. Agnosticism was rife among the students, and I imbibed its principles. Huxley, Tyndall and Spencer became my trinity. From the day they usurped the place of the three Divine Persons, I parted with everything that made life worth living. I left college a confirmed Agnostic and the most wretched of men. I feel, however, that I owe a duty to society, and most of all to my own flesh and blood, and I have determined that whatever else my son inherits he shall not inherit his father's legacy of woe." He noticed the amazement with which I listened to his tale and, anticipating remonstrances on my part, he courteously said: "No use arguing, father, my faith is lost, never to return." Here was a man of superior intelligence, with judgment enough to keep one he loved from following in his footsteps, yet a self-confessed apostate, miserable beyond expression, divested of the hope of human power to restore joy to his heart, and of heavenly grace to restore peace to his soul.—*John J. Hurst.*

Hence, as you know, the loss of faith begins with religious indifference, neglect of prayer, neglect of Mass, neglect of the Sacra-

ments. "First comes tepidity," sings a German poet; "then doubt, then hatred and derision. Half-thinking leads to Satan! whole-thinking leads to God." "No one," says a French abbé, "shortens the Creed before he has made a breach in the Decalogue." Surely this is of itself a proof that the Creed does not need shortening, and a proof that it is Divine and true.—*P. J. Gannon, S. J.*

IS LIFE WORTH LIVING?

"It was a wonderfully balmy evening in the fall of 1905," relates Rev. L. Ballet, missionary in Japan, "and the sun had just set behind Mount Fiji. Unexpectedly a young Japanese appeared in front of me, desiring to talk to me. I noticed that he was a young student. I bade him enter, and we saluted each other with a low bow, as persons meeting for the first time. I asked him to take a seat opposite me, and took advantage of the first moments of silence to take a good look at him. But imagine my astonishment when his first question was, 'Do you believe life is worth living?' asked in an earnest but calm manner. I confess this question from lips of one so young alarmed me, and went to my heart like a thrust. 'Why, certainly,' was my reply 'life is worth living, and living good. How do you come to ask a question that sounds so strange from the lips of a young man? You certainly do not desire to follow the example of your fellow-countryman, Fijimura Misao, who jumped into the abyss from Mount Kegon?' 'No, sir, at least not yet. I confess, however, that I feel my hesitation to be cowardice, for I have made this resolution for some time. In my opinion man is purely a thing of blind accident, a wretched, ephemeral fly without importance, without value. Why then prolong a life in which a little pleasure is added to so much sorrow, so much disappointment; a life that at any rate finally melts away into nothing? I am more and more convinced that this is the truth.' 'And what brought you to such views?' 'Well, science, philosophy, the books which I have read, for pastime or study. If it were only the opinion of our few Japanese scientists one might hesitate; but the science, the philosophy, of Europe, translated and expounded by our writers, teach the same thing. God, soul, future life, all is idle delusion. Nothing is eternal but only matter. After twenty, thirty, sixty years, man dies, and there remains nothing of him but his body, which will decay in order to pass into other beings, matter like He was. This is what science teaches us; a hard doctrine, I confess; but what is there to be said against it, considering the positive results of scientific research?'" Such is the disastrous result of materialistic teaching.

RESISTING THE KNOWN TRUTH

To resist the known truth does not mean to refuse an intellectual assent to a truth proposed. A *known* truth is a proposition which one has already weighed and recognized as true. To resist the known truth is to refuse to take it into account in regulating the moral life. Thus I may argue out the existence of God from the existence of created things. But my assent to the existence of God is not an act of faith until, under the influence of grace, I have recognized God as *my* God and *my* reward. This is the faith without which

it is impossible to please God. "For he that cometh to God must believe that He is and is the rewarder to them that seek Him." This is a necessary means of salvation. To refuse such means of salvation is to sin against the Holy Ghost. To persevere in such refusal is to run the risk of final impenitence, for final perseverance is nothing but death at an opportune moment. Death, however, is a visitor certain in his coming, but most uncertain in his time of coming.

—*H. G. Hughes.*

For from a perverse will proceeded lust or strong desire, and the serving this lust produced custom, and custom not resisted became a moral necessity, with which, as with certain links fastened one to another (for which reason I called it a chain), I was kept close shackled by this cruel slavery.—*St. Augustine.*

THE OBSTACLES TO CHRISTIANITY

Looked at from a natural point of view, Christianity had everything against it; and, regarded from the same standpoint, paganism, which after three centuries lay prostrate, defeated in its fierce struggle with the religion of Christ, had had all things capable of ensuring it victory. At no time have enlightenment and culture stood higher than they did under the Roman emperors. Civilization had reached its culminating degree. Art, even long before this period, had attained to an excellence which has hardly ever since been approached, not to say surpassed. The literature of ancient Rome, together with that of Greece, was of so perfect a nature that, across the ages down to our own times, Plato and Homer, Cicero and Virgil, as well as a host of others, have kept their place as examples of what polite literature in style and in beauty of expression ought to be.

What had the Apostles and the early Christians to offer in opposition to this learning with its finish of style and beauty of diction? Those first heralds of the Gospel and members of the Catholic Church had none of the wisdom of the world, and, as society reckons learning, no learning. St. Paul himself says that among the followers of Christ there were not many wise, not many learned, not many imbued with the knowledge of the philosophy of the days in which they lived. They had a doctrine to offer; but it was a doctrine which went directly against three-fourths of those things which are the dearest to human nature, and which even severely censured most of the habits which had the society of that day so firmly within their grasp. The process of breaking with such habits would be a very painful one. To an age in which self had been elevated to the rank of a God, the Christian and Catholic religion preached self-denial. To a people with whom every kind of pleasure had been made to appear not only delectable but commendable, it is said that mortification and discomfort formed the better way. How could such a religion hope naturally to make progress?—*John Freeland.*

CHRISTIANITY APPARENTLY DEFEATED

The triumph of Our Lord's enemies was complete. They had avenged themselves fully on Him for holding them up to scorn and denouncing their hypocrisies. He had gained a great hold on the

people, He had spoken of a new era in religion. For a while they had feared Him, but now their power was confirmed, they could go on in their own way as before, no more would be heard of this dangerous movement. He was safely dead, and they could sate themselves with the memory of His utter failure, His frightful sufferings, His indelible disgrace.

The followers of Jesus were discouraged and broken. Simple, uncultivated men, called from their fishing-nets to follow One whose works they saw, but whose ideas they could not comprehend, their faith failed under the trial, they were "scandalized" in Him. The Holy Ghost was not yet given to them, Satan still had power to sift them like wheat. They laid aside their hopes of the re-establishment of the kingdom of Israel, and of sitting at the right hand and at the left hand of their Master. They hid themselves, or hastened away to their homes and previous daily labours. None kept the faith but the Blessed Virgin Mother; she alone, who possessed the secret of His Divinity, was able to trust in His promises and look forward to His triumph.—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE TESTIMONY SUPPORTING CHRISTIANITY

The original evidence of Christianity rests upon the testimony of contemporary writers who tell us of the facts of which they were eye-witnesses,—the life and miracles, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. They wrote so nearly at the time of the events they narrate, that if their testimony could have been impeached, thousands would have impeached it; and some record of this would have been handed down by contemporary Jewish or Pagan authors; for they were the few, and their opponents were the many; they were undistinguished and powerless, whilst all the engines of power and learning were on the other side. Yet they succeeded in gaining credit for their statements. On one day three thousand, and on another five thousand in Jerusalem were converted to the Faith,—men who had seen Jesus and heard Him, and seen Him crucified only two months before. And what personal advantage did the Apostles gain by their statements?—Persecution, scourging, imprisonment, were the immediate result of them to their followers. In the midst of this aspect of affairs it was that one of the leading men of their opponents, a man who would have been remarkable in any age,—the learned Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, who had every thing to lose in this world by the act,—gave his adhesion to the new religion, compelled by that testimony which he felt to be irresistible, when once his attention had been drawn to it by his vision on the road to Damascus.—*W. Lockhart.*

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY

Protestants do not generally know that the identity of the Catholic religion and primitive Christianity is a first principle with us, and has always been so, centuries before Protestantism was heard of; this is the one and only basis on which the Catholic Church rests her exclusive right to "teach all nations," and has always rested on it. Disprove the justness of this claim, and you have reduced the Catholic Church to the level of one of the sects.—*W. Lockhart.*

REVELATION AND TRADITION

THE MEANING OF REVELATION

We may indeed, conclude by means of reasonings more or less satisfactory, that there must be a God, a great First Cause; yet such conclusions of reason are not direct knowledge. What I mean by a revelation, in the theological or religious sense of the word, is some proof given to us, through our senses, of a message from the spiritual world, bringing us direct knowledge of the existence of God, of His rights and our duties, of a future life, and what course we must take to secure happiness after death. Hence we see that if direct knowledge of God and our future state be necessary to man, and if he cannot acquire this knowledge by any natural means, the supernatural assistance of revelation is necessary.—*W. Lockhart.*

I give you to understand, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.—For neither did I receive it of man, nor did I learn it: but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.
—*Gal.* I, 11-12.

INCOMPLETENESS OF REVELATION

Revelation must of necessity be incomplete, in this sense, that though it be complete enough for God's purposes in us, it does not unfold Divine mysteries to us in their entirety. Our capacities are very limited. God may say to us, as Our Lord to the Apostles: "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now" (John xvi, 12). Our minds can not rise to the heights of Divine mysteries, our speech can not convey them; it is not given to man to utter them, as St. Paul says of those things which God showed him. Such knowledge would also increase our responsibilities beyond our strength; it would be a source of danger to us, "lest the greatness of the revelations should lift us up" (II Cor. xii, 7).
—*Bishop Bellord.*

INCOMPLETENESS OF CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE

Many complain of the difficulties and insufficiencies in the evidence in favour of Christianity and the Church. It does not come up to their notion of what the evidence should be. But we must not suppose that the incompleteness of the evidence is the real cause why so many men persevere to the end in rejecting the true Faith. Those who urge such a pretext would probably continue to disbelieve, even were the evidence as clear as they demand it to be. To grant them more convincing proofs would be not only casting pearls before swine, but it would be increasing their responsibility and their sin. If a completer revelation were necessary for begetting Divine faith in any souls, we may be sure that God would have given it to them. Those who find fault with the sufficiency of what God's Providence has done for their enlightenment are the counterpart of those Jews of old who found the evidence of the Resurrection imperfect. Our Lord anticipated that very objection to His Resurrection. He provided against it, and gave a proof of its insincerity. In the parable of Lazarus and Dives, Abraham is represented as saying to the rich man about his incredulous brethren, "They have Moses and the Prophets. If

they believe them not, then neither if one rose from the dead would they believe." This was verified when Our Lord raised His friend, the actual Lazarus, from the dead. One did rise from the dead, and bore witness to Our Lord, but his enemies would not believe. The miracle was wrought before a multitude, it was noised abroad and well known. Lazarus was seen in public. Did men accept Our Lord the more on that account? No. For "the chief priests thought to kill Lazarus also, because many of the Jews, by reason of him, went away and believed in Jesus" (John xii, 10, 11). What wilful blindness, what a perverse choice of evil before good. It would be well nigh incredible, were not the examples of it too numerous. The appearance of Our Lord once more before Ananias, and Herod, and the Pharisees, would, so far from converting, have stimulated them to attempt further outrages upon Him in His glorified state.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE MEASURE OF REVELATION SUITED TO OUR CONDITION

We are not adapted for an unlimited increase of spiritual knowledge. In the second place then, darkness is suitable to our present condition of corruption and the limited nature of our faculties. We could not bear the fulness of the revelation of God. Moses, who in type was the nearest approach to the image of Our Blessed Lord in the Old Testament, the great channel of early revelation, the leader of the people of God, the founder of the first dispensation, he who was the friend of God and conversed familiarly with Him, Moses asked for this fuller revelation and it was not granted to him: "Show me Thy face," he said, "that I may know Thee"; and again, "Show me Thy glory." And God made answer, "Thou canst not see My face; for man shall not see Me and live." And again God told him on his repeated request, that He would place him in a cleft of the rock and protect him with His right hand so that he might see, as it were, the skirts of His glory as He passed by, "but my face," He said, "thou canst not see" (Exod. xxxiii).—*Bishop Bellord.*

REVELATION SUFFICIENT

Mankind being what they are, have we any reason for supposing that a further revelation from God would have any good effect? Is it not probable that what we each receive, and what has been given to the world at large, incomplete though it be, and insufficient to answer all difficulties and objections, is precisely the quantity which is most beneficial to us? Is it not likely that God has so moderated the light that it is enough for human nature such as it is, and enough for the purposes of our existence, yet not so much as to overburden us and increase our responsibilities beyond human strength? It may be that fewer still would be found faithful with more abundant light. "To whom they have committed much, of him they will demand the more" (Luke xii, 48). Correspondence with our present graces is difficult enough almost to make us envy those who have received much less than we; because with their actual opportunities they may yet rise higher than we ever shall, while, if unfaithful, they can never fall so low. So at the day of Judgment, Sodom and Gomorrha, with all their ignorance and crimes, will fare

better than many who actually looked on the face of God-made man, who were moved by His words of power and saw His miraculous works. Perhaps the chief result of further light would be to make unbelievers more incredulous still of Divine mysteries. The difficulty in many cases is not that too little has been revealed, but rather too much. They who reject what is offered to them might perhaps have accepted less. A greater quantity would only afford them additional opportunities for blasphemy and unbelief. The present revelation, if made to the Children of Israel of old, would have been too advanced for their stage of development both mental and spiritual. Mankind needed to grow much older and acquire more cultivation of various kinds, before the mystery of the Trinity could be revealed to them or the mystery of the Incarnation accomplished. These doctrines might have been to them fresh incentives to polytheism and to new corruptions of the truth. The revelation which they received, fuller than that possessed in fragments by the Gentiles, was more than the Jews would bear and act up to. We may conclude that much the same would be the case now, and that a more complete revelation would be in advance of our actual state of development.

—Bishop Bellord.

REVELATION AND UNBELIEF

But, it may be objected, if the evidence for the Christian revelation is so strong, how is it that so many persons in this world, from the beginning to the present day, have not found it sufficient to convince them? How is it that there are any unbelievers? "How is it, that I myself," a person may say, "do not feel convinced of the truth of Christianity?" Now, in the first place, I reply that the fact of many persons not believing, affords no presumption against those who do; for there is nothing to show that the great majority of unbelievers have given careful attention to the matter; and the presumption is that they have not; because taking believers and unbelievers together, we find that questions of religion affect most men less than questions of the present life, temporal interests and the pleasures of the senses.

—W. Lockhart.

REVELATION AND TRADITION

The Christian Revelation comes to us through the testimony of eye witnesses; but here, at the very outset, we must anticipate an objection. Many persons have said: "Here is the difficulty of receiving Christianity, that we are called on to believe at second hand. If we had seen with our own eyes the alleged facts, the case would have been very different; but whatever rests on this kind of testimony seems to our minds cloudy and uncertain."

But really, to argue thus, is to go against common sense, and to show that we do not understand the philosophy of human testimony although we act upon it hourly in every relation of life. The food which we eat, the medicine which we take, we receive on the testimony of others. We trust the cook and apothecary, for we have not investigated for ourselves, by chemical tests, whether that particular meat, or that especial medicine, may not contain deadly poison. We cannot prove to ourselves that we are the children of our own parents, we take the fact on testimony; the laws of the land are framed on the same principle, and all questions of property are decided by the

examination of witnesses—that is, by testimony. If a man will not accept testimony, but will believe only what his own senses tell him he is fit only for the solitary confinement of a maniac, for indeed he will have become one.—*W. Lockhart.*

TRADITION

The tradition of the Church is the continual handing down, whether by word or writing, without addition or diminution, of the whole teaching of our Lord and His Apostles, by virtue of the perpetual guidance of the teaching Body, by the Holy Ghost dwelling in it. And that unless we admit an infallible Church we have no certainty of the truth of either oral tradition or Scripture itself, since even Scripture itself rests, for the only proof of its inspiration, on the tradition and infallibility of the Church as late as the fourth century.—*W. Lockhart.*

We give thanks to God without ceasing: because that when you had received of us the word of the hearing of God, you received it not as the word of men, but (as it is indeed) the Word of God, Who worketh in you that have believed.—I *Thess.* II, 13.

The things which thou hast heard of Me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also. —II *Tim.* II, 2.

Brethren, stand fast: and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by our Epistle.—II *Thess.* II, 14.

"What is there in common between the Scripture and your fabulous Tradition?" said a Protestant one day to a priest. "Hand me a Bible," said the latter. The Protestant gave him the volume, which the priest opened and examined, and then laid down, saying with feigned indignation: "I asked you for a Bible, sir, the Holy Scriptures, not this book of fables you offer me." "The book I gave you," said the Protestant, greatly scandalized, "is the grand Book of Books, containing the old and the new covenant of God with men." "And how do you know that this book is the Divine work of which you speak, and not a book of fables invented somewhere or other in the olden days?" "How do I know it? Why, by the infallible testimony of our forefathers who from age to age have transmitted this book to us as the Word of God." "Ah, you admit, then, an infallible tradition, you who protest against Tradition!"—*Guillois.*

Let me remind our friends of a familiar example, the substitution of Sunday for the Sabbath. We Christians work on Saturday, the seventh day, against the Commandment which says, *on the seventh day thou shalt do no work,* and we keep holy, though in a less strict manner than the Jews, the first day of the week, namely Sunday; yet there is not a text in Scripture which commands the change or authorizes breaking the old seventh day obligation.

There are passages in the Acts, for instance, which show that the

early Christians met together for worship on the first day of the week. But that does not prove that they did not observe the seventh day as well. In fact, it is certain that they did so, for we find the Apostles, no less than Our Lord Himself, observing the Mosaic law, and even offering sacrifices in the Temple (Acts xxi.) in order not to give cause of scandal to the Jews, so we may safely infer that they would not, at that time, have authorised the breach of the Mosaic Sabbath. The change took place only gradually, as the Gentile converts increased and the Jewish converts became stronger in the faith. But, for the authority which made the change we must refer to the Church, infallible in teaching and with authority to dispense from the law which had been given from Mount Sinai to Moses, and to declare where it was of perpetual obligation, as in this instance, so far as regards the obligation of keeping holy one day, in seven, and where the obligation has ceased, namely as to the particular day of weekly observance, and special mode of sanctifying it.

Infant baptism, again, rests on tradition, for there is not a text of Scripture commanding it, or a single instance in Scripture recording the baptism of infants.—*W. Lockhart.*

THE BIBLE

THE BIBLE NOT OUR ONLY GUIDE

St. Peter warned us long ago against the Protestant principle of the Bible being our only and all-sufficient guide. Speaking primarily of St. Paul's writings he says, "In the which are many things hard to be understood which the unlearned and unstable wrest as they do also the other Scriptures to their own destruction." This text alone suffices to show that the Scriptures are not by themselves a safe or sufficient guide. What other guide is there? St. Paul has already told us it is "the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth," I ask again, have you any other meaning to give to the words?—*W. Lockhart.*

THE BIBLE NOT INTENDED TO BE OUR ONLY GUIDE

Catholics do not believe that the Bible was intended by Christ to be our only guide, and hence we cannot deem it, by itself, a sufficient guide. For, in the first place, if this principle was established by Christ our Lord, it must have been equally true in the beginning as at the present day. But it is an historical fact that during all the fifteen centuries between the time of Christ and the invention of printing, this rule was incapable of application, and therefore practically a dead letter. The Bible could not be the practical guide for the many, when it was only in the hands of the few. When all books had to be copied by hand, there could have been no cheap books, and therefore none but public institutions, nobles, princes, and rich men, could have had copies of the Bible, since it is calculated that a complete copy of the Scriptures, written in the plainest manner, could not have cost much less than sixty pounds in English money. But not only were there no Bibles for the people, but there were no people to read Bibles; for when books were scarce, there were few who

would undergo the task of learning to read, since they knew beforehand that they would seldom have the fortune of meeting with a book.
—*W. Lockhart.*

THE BIBLE A MIRROR

The holy Bible is a mirror. It reflects the goodness and greatness of the hidden God. It reflects, as no other book can, the secrets of the human heart.—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

All Scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice.—That the man of God may be perfect furnished to every good work.—II *Tim.* III, 16-17.

THE BIBLE AND TRADITION

For if "the Bible and the Bible only" were a sufficient guide in religion then there can be nothing important in religion, which cannot be proved on that principle. But there are many things which you consider important in religion, but which you cannot prove from the Scriptures only; therefore "the Bible and the Bible only" is not a sufficient guide. If either of my premises is doubted, I would invite you who have all along taken for granted that this principle is sound, to test it on its own merits, and to prove, if you can, by plain texts of Scripture, the following points:—

I.—The obligation of the Christian Sabbath:—First—The Divine Command in Scripture to keep holy the first day of week, namely, Sunday instead of the seventh day, which is Saturday, and which is still kept by the Jews, who follow the command given by God through Moses. Secondly—The Divine permission in Scripture to work on Saturday, the old seventh day; whereof it is said, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, in it thou shalt do not work, &c." (Exod. xx.) Thirdly—Proof from Scripture that we are not bound to keep holy the seventh day also.

II.—The necessity of infant baptism; or a single instance of it recorded in Scripture; or any command or permission to confer it.

III.—The lawfulness of eating fowl that has been strangled and meat killed with the blood in it, which the Jews never do, and which is a part of the Mosaic law, re-imposed on Christians by the Apostles —see Acts, xv, 29.

IV.—Proof from Scripture only of the Canon and Inspiration of the New Testament, and rule by which to discover by internal evidence the inspiration of writing; as for instance of Ecclesiastes and Solomon's Song (otherwise called the Canticles), which Protestants admit to be inspired, as distinguished from Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon which they rank amongst the Apocryphal books.
—*W. Lockhart.*

An Indian Rajah, of vast possessions, one of England's subject Princes, dies, after having disposed of his treasures and his territories amongst the different members of his family. It comes to pass that after some years, disputes arise amongst the legatees. After passing through the Law Courts in India, the case comes to be heard in a Court of Appeal in the old country. The whole matter turns on the interpretation of some clauses in the will, that is to say, as to what

was the actual meaning of the testator. Now, on what principle would the matter be decided? Recourse, would naturally be had to adepts in the languages, and customs of India. The exact meaning of the words would be investigated. But the matter would not be decided on these grounds. For the question is not as to what the words might, with more or less propriety, express (for words are generally capable of more than one meaning), but what was the actual meaning of the testator. What he meant to convey, and was understood to express, at the time and on the spot where he made his will. What then would be the action of the Court? The whole case would be suspended until persons could be sent out to India to take depositions on the spot, if possible, of the lawyer who made the will, and other disinterested persons, who were in the confidence of the testator, and could depose as to his intention in so wording his will. On these grounds the legal authorities on the spot would have given original possessions to the legatees, and these must be the basis of all future legal decisions. In short, the testimony of trustworthy eye-witnesses and contemporaries who knew the mind of the testator would be taken as conclusive, and as settling beyond doubt or cavil the real meaning of the will. Such witnesses would be accepted as the only really unexceptionable umpires, and the Courts of law would only endorse their testimony and give it the authority of law.

The application is obvious. The inspired writers guided by the mind of our Lord are the authors of the will or testament, and stand in the position of the testator. The disciples of the Apostles, Ignatius, Clement, Polycarp, and their contemporaries, and scholars, Justin and Irenaeus, are the witnesses whose testimony would certainly be deemed conclusive, if they lived in our day, and were subpoenaed before the Chief Justice of the United States, in any question which turned on evidence as to the intention of the Testator.—*W. Lockhart.*

THE CHURCH THE GUARDIAN OF THE BIBLE

The Westminster version is hailed (by the *Phila. Public Ledger,* Sejt. 7, 1913), as "the most important Roman Catholic work produced in England since the Reformation"; the work of the Biblical Commission under Abbot Gasquet is called "the only serious attempt to revise the Bible since the third century."

The *New York Times,* September 14, 1913, concludes a half-page article on this work with the statement that "the revision of the *Vulgate* could be intrusted to no sounder scholar, to no more skillful director of men" than to Abbot Gasquet; and the work he is directing is called by this paper "the greatest literary undertaking of the century." In regard to "higher criticism," the *New York Sun* says that "as it is now, the Pope is the sole bold, positive and uncompromising champion of the Bible as the Word of God." And Dr. Lorimer (Non-Cath.) says the same: "Only the Pope, only the Church of Rome, comes to the front as the champion of the Bible against the destructive critics."

INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE

The entire laws of a state are contained in a few volumes, whereas there are thousands of volumes of commentaries on the meaning of

these laws. Yet, when the laws were made, their wording was most scrupulously composed to make the meaning clear. Is the meaning of the Bible less subject to misinterpretation, less important than the laws of a state. Of a man who attempts his own interpretation of the laws, and to be his own lawyer, it is said that he has a fool for his client.

AN AUTHORITY NEEDED FOR INTERPRETATION

"Just so, Judge," said the father. "Now let me ask you a somewhat personal question. You are a United States' judge: what are you judges wanted for?" "Why," he replied, "to interpret the laws, and give sentence when they are broken." "But," said the father, "have not American citizens the legal code of the United States to go by?" "Certainly," he answered, "but no code can interpret itself, and no man is a safe interpreter in his own case, each would be likely to discover an interpretation favourable to his own opinion of what the law ought to be, and the diverse interpretations of the law would be without end."—*W. Lockhart.*

PRIVATE JUDGMENT

There are people who act toward the Church of Jesus Christ, which He established to carry on His work and teaching, to represent Him, to manifest Him to the world by the action of His Holy Spirit dwelling within her, there are people, I say, who act toward God's Church precisely in the manner in which the Jews acted toward Jesus Christ. There are people who, though, like the Jews, they profess an ardent belief in and devotion to the Redeemer of Mankind, and to the interests of His Kingdom upon earth, yet have made up their minds for themselves, by private judgment, what the religion of Jesus Christ ought to be.—*H. G. Hughes.*

MYSTERIES; MIRACLES

THE MYSTERIES OF RELIGION—OUR TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

The doctrines and mysteries of religion are our tree of knowledge, not to be tasted or investigated thoroughly by us. These we accept on the sufficient witness of the Church that they are the revelation of God; we know that He has bidden us believe them, but we do not know the intrinsic reasons of these mysteries. They must not be treated by us as ordinary objects of curiosity; they must be approached with reverent meditation, with prayer for sufficient understanding and faith to accept them. Free criticism, comparison with our own private standards of taste and fitness, the demand for such kind of proofs as we choose to yield to, hesitation as to whether we shall accept it or reconsider our opinion; these are the methods to be followed with the objects of human science. These things God has delivered to us for discovery, examination, discussion; about these He has made no revelation; we have absolute freedom in accepting or rejecting. These are all the other trees of the garden which God has left us to use as we wish.

Adam's revolt against the reservation from him of the tree of knowledge has survived in his progeny, who have a rebellious tendency against anything that limits their knowledge. They feel humiliated by this yoke; they would master all knowledge, investigate all secrets, even those which are unlawful.—*Bishop Bellord.*

OBSCURITY IN RELIGION

Obscurity in religion is also an evident requirement from the point of view of ourselves. The fact that faith is a supreme homage to God demands that there be a sacrifice of self in it; the fact that it is a virtue requires that there be an exertion in practicing it; the fact that it is highly meritorious demands that there be freedom in choosing or rejecting it. If religious doctrines were as evident as the multiplication table, they would simply force our assent, there would be no alternative of rejection possible, our assent would not be free.—*Bishop Bellord.*

OUR INABILITY TO GRASP ALL RELIGIOUS TRUTHS

How can any one expect that man should be able to grasp all religious truth? Human faculty can not grasp the whole of anything, even of those things which lie within its own range. No man, though he had the most receptive mind, though he were to live ten thousand years, would be able to take in even the products of other men's minds. No one claims to distinguish an object ten miles off as clearly as one that is before the eyes; yet some expect that they should be able to master the remotest secrets of the Divinity, as they would a piece of present mechanism.—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE BELIEF IN WHAT WE CANNOT SEE OR UNDERSTAND

There was once a Princess who had been taught in her childhood the truths of Faith in her Catechism. But when she grew up she gradually lost her Faith; and like other unbelievers, she used to say she would not believe anything she did not see or understand. One night she had a dream. She dreamed that she was walking through a great forest. She was alone. In the forest she saw a cottage, and at the door of the cottage there was a blind man sitting. She drew near to him and said, "My good man, I see you are blind; tell me, were you always blind, or is your blindness the result of an accident?" "My lady," he replied, "I was born blind." "Oh, how sad must be your lot!" replied the Princess. "You have never seen the beautiful sun, and you do not know what light is." "No," he answered, "I have never seen the sun, and I have not the slightest idea what it is like, but I firmly believe that it must be something very beautiful."

The blind man then changing the tone of his voice, and assuming a serious manner, continued, "You say you will not believe things which you do not see, or do not understand. Learn, then, from my example that there are many things which you cannot understand, but which are really true, as true as the things which you can understand and see" The Princess awoke, but the dream gave her a profitable lesson.

WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

St. Thomas Aquinas says that a miracle is "A sensible effect, produced by God, which transcends all the forces of nature."

Now an event may transcend the forces of nature in three different ways. Firstly, it may involve an act which no power in nature can ever produce under any circumstances or conditions whatever. Such a miracle takes place when the same body is made to occupy two different places at the same time: this we find in the bilocation of some of the Saints.

Secondly, it may involve an act which nature may indeed produce, but not *under the same circumstances,* as for instance the flowering of a dry and dead branch in the depth of winter. Nature can produce blossoms and flowers on a branch, but *not under such circumstances.*

Thirdly, it may involve an act which nature may indeed produce but *not in the same manner.* If, for example, a man have his legs broken, nature may knit together the shattered bones and heal the wounds by a slow and gradual process. But a sudden and instantaneous and complete cure could not be ascribed to unassisted nature, but would partake of the character of a miracle.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

MIRACLES

The Divine immutability is in no way compromised by a miracle since a miracle argues no change in the decrees of God. St. Augustine expresses the whole doctrine, with his usual accuracy and precision, in a single sentence: *"Deus opera mutat, non consilium."* God produces a change in external things, but there is no change in His own mind. Both the laws and the exceptions to those laws fall under the same Divine Providence. He does not first establish a law and then suspend it when some special and unforseen circumstance arises. There is no future in God's knowledge, and nothing unforeseen. Every circumstance which to us is future, is seen by Him, as actually present. His plans are laid from the beginning, with the full and present consciousness of every prayer that will ever be addressed to Him, and of every circumstance that would make a miracle useful or desirable. The interruption of a law, or the suspension of a decree, on account of exceptional circumstances, such as the need of manifesting His power, or the testifying to the truth of some doctrine, is all provided for and arranged from eternity, and denotes no shadow of mutability in the mind of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. To deny this argues confusion in the mind of the objector.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

Consider how man himself can suspend or reverse the action of the laws of nature. Take the law of gravitation. Is it wholly inamenable to our will? An example will show. Here is a heavy stone resting on the ground. The weight of gravity tends to keep it fastened and riveted to the earth. But I stretch down and, seizing hold of the stone, I lift it up over my head, a distance of six feet. What has happened? I have not indeed destroyed the attraction of gravity. No. But I have, in this particular case, and so far as the stone is concerned, rendered it inoperative. Indeed,

I have so utterly counteracted its effect that the stone, instead of following the line of gravity, and *falling* from A to B, *rises* in opposition to gravity's force and describes a path from B to A. Have I, in consequence, thrown the whole machinery of the universe out of gear? Have I, even in an infinitesimal degree, tended to produce confusion? Evidently not.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

Protestants are ready enough to admit that Christ can and did work miracles. Some will go so far even as to admit that the more favoured of His followers may be made mediums of graces and favours. But they draw the line at inanimate objects. They cannot persuade themselves that the water of Lourdes, for example, can be, under any circumstances, one whit better than the water of the Loire or the Liffy, though the Scripture itself shows us how the waters of one place may be better than the waters of another, since Naaman was cured of leprosy by the waters of the Jordan, though no river in Damascus could do him any good. (IV. Kings.) Nor can they imagine that the dead bones of one man can possess any more virtue than those of another, though here again it is the Scripture itself that informs us that the bones of Elizeus wrought miracles not accorded to the bones of ordinary men.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

THE CHURCH

THE CHURCH, THE VOICE OF GOD

It is perfectly true that the Church does not allow her children to entertain any doubt of her teaching; and that, first of all, simply for this reason because they are Catholics only while they have Faith, and Faith is incompatible with doubt. No one can be a Catholic without a simple Faith, that what the Church declares in God's name, is God's word, and therefore true. A man must simply believe that the Church is the oracle of God; he must be as certain of her mission, as he is of the mission of the Apostles.—*Cardinal Newman.*

THE CHURCH, THE APPOINTED TEACHER

A party of travelers were standing on a lofty hill in the Australian Bush, where they have lost their way. Out-wearied and sinking, their provisions long exhausted, they are looking out with intense anxiety for some signs of human habitation, towards which they might direct their steps. Far as the eye can reach, extend the boundless plains, which seem as if they had never been trodden by foot of man. At last they all descry, in the far distance, a dark object, standing or moving, they cannot decide. "Ha!" exclaims one, "there is surely a man, far away in the midst of the plain." "Man!" says another, "I can see nothing but the stump of a tree." "No," says a third, "it moves and now I am confident it is a horse." Now all these three men have one, and the same object before their eyes, and yet they each understand it differently. Who shall decide between them? Clearly, they might argue through the long summer day, till night came on and took the object itself from their view.

What is it they need to end their doubts and bring them to one way of thinking? Surely what they want is a witness, who is in a position to speak with conclusive authority and declare the truth. If now while they are disputing, one of their party who had long strayed from the rest, came up, having in his possession a telescope, he would be an umpire who could decide. He would examine the distant object with his glass and turning to the rest perhaps would say: "You are all more or less wrong; it is a mounted shepherd, riding in our direction. We cannot then be far from some settlement. Our lives are saved." The parable needs only to be applied. The travelers seeking their way, are men seeking the true religion, and the way to Heaven. The object before them is the text of Holy Scripture, as to the meaning of which they differ, and may differ to the end, unless an umpire can be found who is in a position to say who is right and who is wrong.

And now, who is this conclusive witness and umpire? Let me say at once that to the Catholic this umpire and witness is that Divinely appointed Teacher "the Church of the Living God which is the pillar and ground of the truth."—*W. Lockhart.*

There will arise up false prophets, and they shall show signs and wonders, to seduce (if it were possible) even the elect.—Take you heed therefore; Behold I have foretold you all things.

—*Mark* XIII, 22-23.

Holy Father, keep them in Thy Name, whom Thou hast given Me: that they may be one, as We also are.—That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee: that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.—And the glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given to them: that they may be one, as We also are One.—John XVII, 11, 21-22.

But all these things One and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as He will.—For as the body is one, and hath many members; and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ.—For in One Spirit were we all baptised in One Body, whether Jews, or Gentiles, whether bond, or free: and in One Spirit we have all been made to drink.

I. *Cor.* XII, 11-13.

As in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office:—So we being many, are One Body in Christ, and every one members one of another.—And having different gifts, according to the grace that is given us, either Prophecy, to be used according to the rule of Faith;—Or Ministry, in ministering: or he that teacheth, in doctrine,—He that exhorteth in exhorting, he that giveth with simplicity, he that ruleth with carefulness, he that showeth mercy with cheerfulness.—Rom. XII, 4-8.

You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people: that you may declare His virtues, who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.—Who in time

past were not a people: but are now the people of God. Who had not obtained mercy: but now have obtained mercy.—I. *Peter* II, 9-10.

This is My Covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is in thee, and My words that I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.—*Is.* LIX, 21.

THE NAMES OF THE CHURCH

Many names which are replete with mysteries, have been applied to designate the Christian commonwealth. Thus, by the Apostle it is called "the house and edifice of God." "If" says he to Timothy, "I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth" (1 Tim. iii, 15). But the Church is called a house, because it is as it were, one family governed by one master of the family, and enjoying a community of all spiritual goods. It is also called the flock of the sheep of Christ, of which He is "the door and the shepherd" (John, x, 7; Ezech. xxxiv, 5). It is called the spouse of Christ: "I have espoused you to one husband," says the Apostle to the Corinthians, "that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. xi, 2); and to the Ephesians: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church" (Eph. v, 25); and of marriages: "This is a great Sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church" (Eph. v, 32). Finally, the Church is called the body of Christ, as may be seen in the epistles to the Ephesians (Eph. i, 23) and Colossians (Coloss. i, 24)—appellations, each of which has very great influence in exciting the faithful to prove themselves worthy the boundless clemency and goodness of God, who hath chosen them to be the people of God.

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, AN HISTORICAL INSTITUTION

I freely admit the preëminence of Catholicism as an historical institution; here she is without a rival or a peer. If to be at once the most permanent, and extensive, the most plastic, and inflexible ecclesiastical organization, were the same thing as the most perfect embodiment, and vehicle of religion, then the claim of Catholicism were simply indisputable. The man in search of an authoritative Church may not hesitate, once let him assume that a visible and audible authority is of the essence of religion, and he has no choice; he must become, or get himself reckoned, a Catholic. . . . The Protestant Churches are but of yesterday, without the authority, the truth, or the ministries, that can reconcile man to God; they are only a multitude of warring sects, whose confused voices but protest their own sin of schism by the way it sets off the might, the majesty and the unity of Rome. In contrast the Catholic Church stands where her Master placed her upon a rock, endowed with the prerogatives and powers He gave to her, and against her the gates of hell shall not prevail.—*Dr. Fairbairn (Non-Cath.).*

THE CHURCH, THE CONTRADICTION OF THE WORLD

But it can never be too much insisted on that the Church is the direct contradiction of the world, and the law of her growth and power the flat denial of its laws. Her whole existence is a paradox. She is a mighty army without horse or foot or guns; she wins astounding victories by defeat; she thrives where by all natural laws she should decline, and declines where men might promise her prosperity. She carries the tidings of joy and the message of peace, and is ever in conflict. She lives apparently in perpetual danger of annihilation, yet survives to chant her requiem masses over the empires that assailed her. She nurtures civilization into being, and when the viper brood turns upon its gray-haired Mother, she calmly awaits the operation of God's inexorable laws, which consign such civilizations to putrefaction from within and dismemberment from without; and then, with her Divine patience, she sets about raising up a new order of things upon the ruins of the old. When one country spurns her, she shakes its dust off her feet, and carries her rejected blessings to another; when one continent falls away, she crosses the frontiers of the next. And thus, in eternal ebb and flow, she passes down the ages, with strong sweep of mighty waters moving noiselessly, because their channel is broad and deep, not with the loud brawling of mountain streams, bickering down their narrow, broken courses.—*P. J. Gannon, S. J.*

THE CHURCH, A SOCIETY

The Church, in the strict and ordinarily accepted sense, is a visible society of men professing the same faith and governed by legitimately appointed pastors under the Roman Pontiff. The end for which this society was instituted is the eternal salvation of its members.

—*F. Harvey.*

God does not deal with each one of us directly in the sense that He communicates to the individual a scheme of belief and conduct. When Christ came upon earth He did not try to visit every country or to speak to every man face to face. The efforts of His public life were directed to the training and confirmation of the Apostles and the foundation of a society which would do His work when He had ascended to the Father. The Church, therefore, responds to the human need for society. We are all commanded to belong to it, to hear its voice, and to obey. It is the means by which we are put in line for salvation. We have indeed our own individual, personal work to do, just as the traveler who is on the right road must himself move on if he is to reach his destination. The Church is the road and besides this road there is none other by which men may reach their end.—*P. C. York.*

THE FITNESS OF THE CHURCH

It is incredible that God should maintain in existence by miraculous power a Church which He had destined to be incapable of doing the work of a Church. It would be an anomaly. It would be a more extraordinary miracle than the gift of perpetual life to the Church if God withheld from it the gift of perpetual fitness for all times. It

would be giving with one hand and taking away with the other, to grant life without that which enabled the life to accomplish its object. If God has the power to preserve the Church in continual existence, He can as easily preserve it in a state of efficiency. If the Church has vitality enough to resist the ravages of time and the assaults of the world and Satan, it is to be presumed that it has vitality enough to keep abreast of human progress.—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE ADAPTABILITY OF THE CHURCH

The enemies of the Church, even while condemning her, wonder at her unexampled adaptability to all circumstances. And indeed there is no such marvelous spectacle on earth. Age differs from age, country from country, all things vary according to time and place. The conditions that helped development in one period are unendurable fetters in the next. Only one institution goes on for ever, itself unchanged, yet adapting itself to every aspect of humanity. In every stage and society, under every form of government, from the center to the extremities of the world, there is one great figure that seems to preside over the destinies of men. It is a unique fact in history that the Church of the Catacombs should be the Church of the Middle Ages and the Church of the Nineteenth Century.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE CHURCH NEVER DISCOURAGED

It is no new thing then with the Church, in a time of confusion or of anxiety, when offenses abound, and the enemy is at her gates, that her children, far from being dismayed, are rather glorying in the danger, as vigorous men exult in trials of their strength—it is no new thing, I say, that they should go forth to do her work, as though she were in the most palmy days of her prosperity. Old Rome, in her greatest distress, sent her legions to foreign destinations by one gate while the Carthaginian conquerer was at the other. In truth, as has been said of our own countrymen, we, Catholics, do not know when we are beaten; we advance, when by all the rules of war we ought to fall back; we dream but of triumphs, and mistake (as the world judges) defeat for victory. For we have upon us the omens of success in the recollections of the past; we read upon our banners the names of many an old field of battle and of glory; we are strong in the strength of our fathers, and we mean to do, in our humble measure, what Saints have done before us. It is nothing great or wonderful in us to be thus minded; only Saints indeed do exploits, and carry contests through, but ordinary men, the serving men and privates of the Church, are equal to attempting them.

—*Cardinal Newman.*

THE DIVINITY OF THE CHURCH OBVIOUS

Again, a world-conquest by poor and ignorant fishermen would be a miracle that would astound the minds of all thinking people. They would be obliged to recognize that some great force was behind it all, and since the work was the spiritual reformation of humanity this force must of necessity, they would say, be Divine.—*F. Harvey.*

INFALLIBILITY NECESSARY

There is nothing more important than to keep truth uncorrupted

by error. The result of admitting a few even slight errors, would soon manifest itself on a large scale. Doctrines would come to be out of harmony with one another, they would not stand together in mutual support, they would seem contradictory, some would be dropped, and religion, instead of being a logical whole, would become a disjointed mass of fragments crumbling to destruction. Great ideas ultimately express themselves in the actions and lives of men. An error may seem too abstruse to be grasped by the multitude, but at last it will have its effect in relaxing faith and fervour and morality. Some think that religious doctrines are outside the sphere of practical life; but there is probably not a single doctrine that has not shared in forming the character of Christians, and not a single denial of any point which has not resulted in some definite species of irreligion or immorality in the general character of worldly men. For each individual it may, in a limited degree, be true, that lofty purposes, and strong endeavour, and rectitude of life, are more important towards his salvation than wide and accurate theological knowledge. But we do not live as unconnected individuals, we form a society which has a corporate life, and continuity, and development, and in which true and false ideas take root and bear fruit in good and evil lives. In a society, and in the long run, the ideas that there are germinating are of much more importance than any individual actions. As long as religious truth remains pure, it must be a source of power to correct men's actions and to preserve society. Therefore, God protected carefully the body of religious doctrines entrusted to the Jews, though they themselves were most corrupt. So, too, has God made the Catholic Church infallible in doctrine, while He has not guaranteed any member of it against sin.—*Bishop Bellord.*

OBJECTING TO AN INFALLIBLE CHURCH

How do you account for so many real believers in the Christian revelation not being Catholics, nay, having an invincible repugnance to your doctrine of an infallible Church?

I account for it in this way. Men are not strictly logical: of course, all men who use their minds go on logical principles to a certain extent. They must give what seems to them a logical answer to the questions which occur to their minds, but many questions do not occur to them; they are content without going to the bottom of questions, and getting to the last or fundamental reason. Thus they may be fair and logical as far as they go, but they do not go far enough to be rigidly logical, and exhaust the whole matter contained in the question. Then again, when I say that they give to themselves what seems to them a true and sufficient answer, and again, that they are fair and logical as far as they go, I imply a great truth, of which every one must be conscious who analyses the acts of his own mind, especially whenever he is called on to exercise the faculty of judgment on any matter on which he has any prepossession or interest. This is, that besides the intellect which judges the question on which the mind is fixed there is another factor in the decision, namely, the human will, which is sure to pull this way or that, often under an unconscious or secret instinct of self-love, which has the fatal power of throwing cross lights, or false lights, as it were, on the

scene, of casting in a weight, or tipping the scale imperceptibly in the very instant when the mind is passing judgment, and so the result is that we perhaps very seldom pass a perfectly unbiassed judgment, some element of the subjective gets mixed in the scale, and thus, though the balance is itself true and infallible, the weighing is not fair and true.—*W. Lockhart.*

THE INFALLIBLE TEACHING BODY

If a revelation was necessary for man because of his ignorance and infirmity and tendency to error, it was equally necessary, that, revelation having been given, a way should be provided of keeping that revelation undefiled by human error and weakness to the end. This was done by our Lord when He constituted a body of teachers, guarded from teaching error by His perpetual presence with them, and with the power of handing down their commission to their successors, so that the promise of our Lord would rest on them also as it had rested on the Apostles.—*W. Lockhart.*

AN AUTHORITY NEEDED FOR GUIDANCE

It is not within the power of any man to dispense with guidance. This is a most enlightened age. What does that mean for the bulk of mankind? That they are more independent of instruction and guidance? On the contrary. It means that there are more masters and guides for them to follow, that there is less scope for the wanderings of their imagination, and less tolerance for their errors. Even the most skilful of men shape their conduct in most important matters on the information they obtain from others; they will not trust their own foresight without taking abundant counsel. Outside their own particular sphere, they are ready to submit unreservedly to a competent authority, to the opinion of a medical man, a lawyer, an engineer, a man of business. And even in his own sphere, a man knows he is no judge in his own case. The physician will call in another to prescribe for him, and will speak as respectfully of that other's opinion as if he himself were quite ignorant of medicine. An eminent lawyer drew up his own will, and its irregularity and obscurity made it the subject of endless litigation. And what shall we say as to the capacity of men in general to guide themselves, ill-informed, undisciplined, prejudiced as they are, blinded by passion, unable to reason, obstinate, or weakly yielding to every fallacy? Of this educated generation it has been written, that none but the very few are capable of forming an opinion about anything that is not self-evident. Almost all men are slaves to the ideas and fashions of the society they live in. Only half a dozen in an age can shake themselves free from these influences and make full use of that liberty of thought that everyone boasts of possessing.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

SUBMISSION TO THE CHURCH

Submission to the Church is not, as many insist, an oppression and a disgrace, but it is the glory and the happiness of her children. They are enabled to render to God the homage of the noblest part of their nature, by bowing their intellect to the obedience of faith; for they submit themselves, not to man, but to God Himself, in

recognizing the authority which He has delegated, and the messengers He has sent. Their submission does honour to themselves, not only as an act of generous sacrifice, but as delivering them from the servitude of error.—*Bishop Bellord.*

SUBMISSION OF THE INTELLECT

Take an illustration. Thus: God enunciates some sublime doctrine, such as that of the Blessed Sacrament. We listen with respectful wonder as He unfolds, one by one, the marvels contained in that dogma. We try in vain to grapple with them, and to render them clear. But we fail to understand. We find ourselves face to face with mystery. Our intellect cannot help us. We must either reject the doctrine and exclaim, with the unbelieving Jews: "How can this man give his flesh to eat and his blood to drink?" Or we must throw ourselves wholly upon the veracity of God, and abandon ourselves unreservedly to Him, before whom the greatest intellect is immeasurably less than is the glow-worm's spark before the noon-day sun. It is not here so much a question of the submission of our will (though our will, too, has a share, and a very important share, in every act of faith) as the submission of our intellect.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

THE CHURCH EMPOWERED TO MAKE LAWS

Now, as to the subject matter of ecclesiastical legislation, and the extent to which it can go in prescribing or prohibiting—all this is to be determined by the Church herself, who is the supreme judge of all such questions, since to her alone has been committed the charge of the entire flock. In saying so much we must guard ourselves against a misapprehension. We do not mean that the Church can make laws and impose duties arbitrarily, as though it rested with her to fix for herself what she fancies, but in the sense that she is Divinely invested with supreme authority from above, both in deciding questions regarding her own power, and in framing and promulgating laws under the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, who has promised to abide with her for ever, and to defend her from all error.

The reasonableness of this claim is patent to all. Why, even the state, with all its imperfections and with no special promise of protection from on high, asserts its right to exercise this prerogative, and will never allow its own competence to be impugned. The legislature in every civilized country is constantly asserting its right to pass laws and to impose restrictions which it considers to be for the benefit and well-being of the country.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH

In the time of Louis XVI., King of France, an old officer who, though a child of the Church, was not too scrupulous in obeying her commands, took it upon himself to speak to his master with regard to the abstinence he was careful to practice when enjoined by the Church. "My lord," he said, "why do you act as the meanest of your subjects do in regard to this matter? Has not Our Lord in the Scriptures told us that 'that which enters the mouth does not defile a man'?" "These are indeed his words," replied the monarch; "but

you must know that it is not eating the flesh-meat that is the sin, for one may at other times partake of it without offending God; the evil lies in the fact that by doing so one rises in revolt against legitimate authority by violating a formal command of the Church. You, who seem to know the Gospel so well, must have read in it these words: 'He who heareth not the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen or a publican.'"

THE SOUL OF THE CHURCH

As we have seen, the Church in this broad sense, or as we say, the Soul of the Church, has existed from the beginning. The Soul of the Church is nothing other than the union of the heart and will with God. Unlike the human soul, it is not limited to the external organization. It may exist in the midst of the heresy and schism innocently professed, and bind to the Redeemer hearts that have no visible union with the body of the Church. Still we must remember that the Church of Christ, the Catholic Church, is "the Divinely appointed organization for saving the souls of men," and that invincible ignorance and good faith form the precarious hope of those that are outside that society founded by Christ.—*F. Harvey.*

THE CHARITY OF THE CHURCH

Throughout the ages the Church "showed itself in good works done to the needy and suffering; the tithes and offerings and income from real property of the Catholic Church went in great part to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to lodge and feed the stranger, to sustain the widow and the orphan, and to heal the wounded and the sick; in short, a great part, and indeed, one of the chief parts of the business of this Church was to take care that no person, however low in life, should suffer from want, either of sustenance or care."—*Cobbett* (*Non-Cath.*), in *History of the Reformation.*

THE WORLDLY DISADVANTAGES OF RELIGION

Those who aspire to have part with Our Lord in His kingdom must be prepared to accept the fact that their religion will be an obstacle to their getting on in the world, that it handicaps them heavily at the starting, and that the irreligious man often prospers while the faithful suffers. This was the case with our blessed Lord. He lived in poverty and labour, He was rejected by every class, He died in ignominy, absolutely crushed by His victorious enemies, precisely because He was the Holy One of God, and because He called me to a spiritual, unworldly and Divine life. We are not to suppose that He endured all this in our stead, but it was to show us what we must be prepared to endure, and often must actually endure. "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord" (Matt. x, 25). St. Paul also warns us that we can not escape temporal evils if we would "live godly in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. iii, 12). The whole of the New Testament abounds in prophecies and examples of the persecutions, hatred, calumny, opposition, restraints, disabilities, losses, suspicion, ridicule and other evils, which are to follow those who are consistently and thoroughly faithful to Christ.—*Bishop Bellord.*

PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH

Men who begin to fight the Church for the sake of freedom and humanity end by flinging away freedom and humanity if only they may fight the Church.—*Chesterton* (*Non-Cath.*), in *Orthodoxy.*

These times are supposed to be liberal, tolerant, indifferent as to a man's opinions; but even now may be found numerous instances of persecution. Our children are often persecuted in the schools, our young working men and girls in factories and workshops. Catholics are kept out of positions for which their abilities make them as fit as anyone else. Let them not murmur nor repine. Let them, indeed, use all lawful means to procure just treatment, but in the meantime let them rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer something for His Name's sake.—*H. G. Hughes.*

THE WORLD PERSECUTES THE CHURCH AS IT PERSECUTED CHRIST

The world is fiercely attacking the Church, it aims to condemn Christ once more to death, and to this end brings false witnesses against Him. It aims to cast down and demolish His Church.

—*St. Theresa.*

THE CHURCH AND SINNERS

Human at once and Christ-like, this attitude of the Church toward sin has ever been one of the strongest arguments for her Divinity. It takes the experience of ages and the wisdom born of world-wide practice, it requires the tender patience of a mother and the Divine love of an Infinite God, thus to commingle with the off-scourings of the race, to choose as a mission the treatment of all human sin and to succeed. And to see the Church in the fulfilment of this mission, to note her ability, her constancy, her long-suffering, her unselfishness, her success, is to have encountered an almost irresistible appeal to accept her as Divine.—*Joseph McSorley, C.S.P.*

THE VISIBLE CHURCH COMPRISES BOTH GOOD AND BAD MEMBERS

Now this Church is known and compared to a city seated on a mountain, which is seen from every side (Matt. v, 14); for as all must obey her authority, it is necessary that she be known. Nor does the Church include the good only, but also the bad as the Gospel teaches in many parables; as when it mentions that "the kingdom of heaven," that is, the Church militant, "is like to a net cast into the sea" (Matt. xiii, 47), or to a field in which tares were sown amongst (the good grain) (Matt. xiii, 24) or to a threshing-floor on which the grain is mixed up with the chaff (Luke, iii, 17), or to ten virgins, some of whom were wise, and some foolish (Matt. xxi, 1, *sq.*). But long before also, we may behold a figure and resemblance of this Church in the ark of Noah, in which were contained not only clean, but also unclean animals, (Gen. vii, 2; 1 Pet. iii, 20). But, although the Catholic faith truly and constantly affirms that to the Church belong the good and the bad, yet it is to be explained to the faithful from the same rules of faith, that very different is the condition of each class; for, as the chaff is mingled with the grain on the threshing-floor, or as members,

deadened in various ways, sometimes remain attached to the body, so also are the wicked contained in the Church.

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

HOLY EMULATION IN THE CAUSE OF THE CHURCH

There are ample motives urging us to take a wide view and to cultivate a generous disposition in our work of helping the Church and her institutions. If we are striving for anything higher than merely escaping hell, our rule of life will be to do that which tends to the greater glory of God. All our actions will be measured by this standard. The work of the Church, however, is especially God's work on earth. The Church is the instrument which God has devised for the salvation of men. Nay, it is the very continuation of His own wonderful Incarnation. To minister to the needs of the Church, therefore, is to minister to Christ's mystical body; it is the most direct way of ministering to God Himself. If Christ were on earth, with what generosity should we provide for His ministrations! But the Church exists solely to continue those ministrations, solely to save sinners. There can be no offering, therefore, too good that we can make to the Church in order to enable her the better to carry on her work.

Secondly, we need to make special efforts in these days because the efforts of the enemy are so well organized and persistent. Secularism has summoned to its aid some of the best things that science, art or literature can provide. Theaters, municipal buildings, libraries, museums, technical schools and even railway stations are designed by the best architects. Shall God's house be served with a less worthy service? Poor law schools, reformatories, asylums and infirmaries provided by the state or municipality are fitted with the latest scientific improvements. Shall the few institutions which the Church keeps directly under her control fare worse than these? Oftentimes the call upon Catholics is so great as to make this a necessity. It is well, however, to bear the contrast in mind, as a motive for holy emulation in the cause of God's Church.

—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

THE SPIRITUAL WEALTH OF THE CHURCH

One source of strength is the abundant wealth of the Church in doctrine, devotion, and practical piety, out of which she is able to satisfy every class of men, both simple and cultivated, and every faculty of mind, or imagination, or heart. Systems of philosophy have been adapted only to the few, the educated of one country or one age: they have never extended to the great masses of population. Religions also have generally had a special national character, which limited their influence to certain races, to Orientals, or to dwellers in the North, to Arabs, to Greeks, or barbarians. Some religions are eminently for respectable people, others are intolerable to any but the half-educated.—*Bishop Bellord.*

LOYALTY TO THE CHURCH

Is our attitude one of loyalty and devotion? Is our Faith the highest in our thoughts and deepest in our hearts? It has created a

standard of living. Are our lives being shaped accordingly? Is our morality derived from the inspirations of that Faith? Are our thoughts thought, our judgments framed, our words uttered, our actions performed in consonance with its teachings? Have we tutored our wills to accept readily and unconditionally all the truths it proposes for our acceptance? Are we proud of our religion? Is it as much to us, or rather is it more to us than home or country? Is it in our eyes our chiefest possession? This examination of conscience will reveal to us our position. Is there any need of exhortation? Should it be necessary to remind you of what value your faith is to you? Should it be needful to ask you to be loyal to your Church, when that loyalty means loyalty to yourself and to your best and most momentous and most lasting interests?

—P. A. Halpin.

THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE

RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Religion is very frequently represented as obstructing scientific investigation. The current statements to this effect are absolutely false. Christianity has always been learned and scientific. She, too, says, *"Nil humanum a me alienum puto,"* all that concerns human life or thought is of interest to her. She has been the nursing mother of science; she preserved and revived learning, she primed gradually the mind of Europe, she taught the methods which in time produced the present marvelous results. All that she has done in the way of restriction amounts to this: she teaches that mundane physical science is not the most necessary, the most sacred, and the most irresponsible of all things, nor its rights supreme above all other rights; but it is susceptible of being wrongly used, devotion to it may run to injurious excess, like devotion to any other of God's creatures; all knowledge is not expedient for every man, and, if it is injurious to his faith or morals, a man is better without it; indeed, a man can attain to his highest development as man without the aid of any natural science. Due guidance and moderation in pursuit of knowledge are necessary to men. Further, religion possesses a certain body of truths which she has received, not by way of critical investigation and scientific discovery, but by revelation from God. She presents these to us for our humble acceptance and reverent meditation, and she will not admit the capacity of the human intellect to sit in judgment on them to choose or reject. She is the sole and unerring guide, and her teachings are above question or discussion, for she speaks the words of God Himself.—*Bishop Bellord.*

A PROTESTANT WRITER'S VIEW ABOUT THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE

Is the Church weakened by an opposing Science? Listen to an authority: "The parvenues of science who a generation ago foresaw the downfall of religion—'in fifty years your Christianity will have died out,' said one—are going to be as disappointed as was the fashionable society of Butler's day [when, in his *Analogy,* he declared that Christianity had already one foot in the grave]. For there is

more to life than Science can ever deal with, and so far as the eternal problems of our human lot are concerned, all the sciences together are like inch-worms clambering up the Matterhorn in an endeavour to discover the distance of the stars!"
—(*Harry Emerson Fosdick,* in the *Atlantic Monthly,* October, 1913.)

THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE

And so the Church has been accused, and is still accused sometimes, of being the enemy of learning and science, the foe of progress, and the supporter of ignorance and superstition. She can afford to smile at the ignorance of her accusers, she has no need to defend herself, for the very stones cry out against them. The witness of history is clear and decisive, that if there have been preserved to the world the treasures of classical literature, the arts, sciences of bygone ages, the stored-up wisdom of the sages of old, it is due to the ceaseless efforts of the Church and her most devoted servants. Strong in a faith which can never falter, and in a truth which neither modern discoveries nor ancient philosophy can ever, I will not say destroy, but even shake for a moment, she hands down to the world through all the ages the accumulated science of past generations. Take those Middle Ages, which are known by the contemptuous name of the Dark Ages, in which it is represented that the world was sunk in barbarism, owing to the power of the Church. What do we find when we examine them more closely? We find an age in which the light of faith burned brilliantly, in the midst of the turbulence of a society not yet completely civilized. We find striking contrasts, great crimes side by side with extraordinary sanctity, ignorance indeed, but at the same time learning such as it would be difficult to parallel nowadays. We find the Christian nations emerging from barbarism. And whose hand is it that is ever stretched out to draw from the abyss of ignorance but that of the Catholic Church?

—*Bede Camm, O. S. B.*

FAITH AND SCIENCE

A favourite argument of those who assert the incompatibility of faith and science has been the claim that almost all great scientists have been, and are, unbelievers. That this claim is false has been proved by inquiries made recently by both Protestants and Catholics. Investigation revealed the fact that ninety-two per cent of all scientists of real standing, of both the past and the present, are believers in God, and the greater number are practical Christians.

THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE

A century ago or so, ridicule was heaped in the name of science on the description in the Bible of the last day: "The stars shall fall," "and the powers of heaven shall be moved," "the elements shall be melted with heat, and the earth shall be burnt up," (Matt. xxiv., 29 seq.; Luke xxi., 25 seq.; Mark xiii., 24 seq.; 2 Pet. iii., 10). Then the assertion that stones could fall from the skies caused a smile, but now science has come to the general knowledge that this is not only possible, but perhaps really will be the end of all things, if once our earth on its journey through unknown spaces of the universe

should collide with a comet or get into a cosmic cloud of large meteors.

FREEDOM OF TEACHING NOT UNRESTRICTED EVEN AMONG PROTESTANTS

The Independent (New York) of Feb. 2, 1914, reports under the head "Freedom of Teaching" the dismissal of a professor from the Presbyterian University at Easton, Pa. After quoting from the charter Article VIII, which provides "that persons of every religious denomination shall be capable of being elected trustees, nor shall any person, either as principal, professor, tutor or pupil be refused admittance into said college, or denied any of the privileges, immunities or advantages thereof, for or on account of his sentiments in matters of religion," the report goes on to say: "It appears, however, from the investigations of the committee, that President Warfield insists that the instruction in philosophy and psychology has to be such, as, in his opinion, accords with the most conservative form of Presbyterian theology."

CREATION AND EVOLUTION

The word "creation" has two meanings. In one sense it means the making of something out of nothing. In another sense it means the arrangement and development or evolution of that first something into the subsequent forms of nature. There are various opinions as to what extent this evolution took place. A Catholic is allowed much freedom in this matter. One thing, however, he is bound to hold against all extreme evolutionists, namely, that the soul of man was specially created and infused into the body by God. There are other truths bearing on this subject which, though not of Catholic faith, should be insisted upon in the name of science. The two most important are, first, that no one has yet succeeded in producing life from non-life; and secondly, that no one has yet bridged the gulf between reason and sensation. These truths are the two great stumbling-blocks which lie in the way of those shallow scientists who would explain away the dogma of creation by an artificial and exaggerated system of evolution.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

SCIENTIFIC THEORIES SHORT LIVED

And how often the hypotheses of profane sciences change! "Laymen are astonished," says H. Poincaré, "that so many scientific theories are perishable. They see them thrive for a few years, to be abandoned one after the other; they see wrecks heaped upon wrecks; they foresee that theories now fashionable will after a short while be forgotten, and they conclude that these theories are absolute fallacy. They call it the bankruptcy of science." The conclusion is certainly unjustified, but the fact itself remains. Is it then a loss to science when faith opposes in the field of religion these variations of opinion with fixed dogmas?—*W. Lockhart.*

WHAT AN INFIDEL SCIENTIST SAYS OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

We grant at once that the innermost character of nature is just as little understood by us as it was by Anaximander and Empedocles

2400 years ago, by Spinoza and Newton two hundred years ago, by Kant and Goethe one hundred years ago. We must even grant that this essence and substance become more mysterious and enigmatic the deeper we penetrate into the knowledge of its attributes.

—*Ernst Haeckel.*

And the great Newton, in the evening of his life, thus estimates the worth of his knowledge: "What the world may think about my labour I do not know: I feel like a child that plays on the strand of the sea: now and then I may perhaps find a pebble or shell more beautiful than those of my playmates, while the boundless ocean lies ever before me with its undiscovered treasures."

CHANGES OF HUMAN OPINION

The Church is, and always has been, independent of the changes of human opinion. What God has revealed is what man is unable to find out for himself; and no matter what discoveries man may make, or suppose himself to have made, the authority of Divinely revealed truth is supreme. That truth cannot be altered or abandoned by reason of any merely human opinion, however widespread or however strongly supported. But, indeed, even apart from the necessarily supreme authority of the "depositum fidei," the experience of past centuries would be sufficient to show the folly of abandoning the firm ground of revelation for the shifting sands of opinion. People are always strong advocates of their own opinion; their advocacy would even seem to be the stronger in proportion as their opinions are ill-founded; and from time to time the advocates of new opinions are passionately indignant at the Church's refusal to support them. But no opinion is permanent; the most popular is generally the first to give way to a successor, and if the Church could have made itself the advocate of every new opinion which could claim the support of numbers and of plausibility she would long ago have been too discredited to continue to exist. It is the same with all branches of human knowledge: theology, philosophy, science, literature, and even art have all furnished the foundation for heresy after heresy, of few of which is there any vestige remaining in the world.

A typical instance may be found in the treatment by most Christian bodies of the Darwinian theory of evolution in our own day. The outburst of intense indignation which greeted the address at Belfast, in which Professor Tyndall commended the doctrine to popular acceptance, is well within the memory of many of us. But it was not long, an affair of little more than months, before the Darwinian hypothesis was declared from countless pulpits to be not merely consistent with the Christian doctrine of creation, but a striking confirmation, even in detail, of the Mosaic cosmogony. Finally, within the last few years, it has come to be considered doubtful, at best, whether the doctrine of evolution, as stated by the great naturalist, has any real foundation at all.—*A. B. Sharpe.*

THE NARROWNESS OF ATHEISM

It is a source of wonder to many of us how minds great in one department are deplorably weak in other fields. For instance, we are

told that Lelande, the great astronomer, when discussing with one the existence of God, complacently said, without apparently seeing the absurdity and lack of logic in his remark: "I have swept the entire heavens with my telescope, and I can find no God there." So weak and illogical are others, who frequently affirm that they will believe nothing that they cannot see. As well might we say that we do not believe in most of the inventions of modern genius—the telegraph, the telephone, the phonograph, the X-ray, all of electricity's miraculous strides, and of spectrum analysis—all of which act as unseen forces, and in which we believe, though we do not see them.

—*W. Lockhart.*

THE CHURCH AND CIVILIZATION

THE CHURCH AND PROGRESS

The Church has always been concerned, and now as much as formerly, with the real progress of men, *i. e.*, their moral and intellectual advancement, their social order, their happiness, and the averting of the evils of war, disease and the like, even although these lie outside the sphere of strictly spiritual progress. But there is another department of worldly progress, it is that which is simply material, or rather it consists of the instruments of progress, wealth, comfort, inventions, machinery, commerce, rapid transport, great buildings, sanitary improvements and such like. Although the Church has taken her full share in the development of these, still they lie further outside her principal object, and, in later times especially, she has devoted less attention to them. At the same time men are getting to value these things more and more, and to set them, not only above spiritual interests, but above the higher worldly interests of mankind. Material progress has come to be considered as the real substance of progress and an end in itself, instead of the means and instrument of progress. The Church has not shared in this exorbitant appreciation of material achievements. She has pointed out that their advantages are not unmixed; that, according to the way they are used, they may be injurious as well as beneficial; that they may be prejudicial to the highest progress of man, and that their use must be controlled and subordinated to the spiritual laws of justice and charity.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE CHURCH THE ENEMY OF FALSE PROGRESS

In one limited sense the Church *is* the enemy of progress, *i. e.*, of a certain progress that is destructive of all real advance. It is only to be called progress in a logical sense, viz., because it is the carrying out of the false promises to worse conclusions. There is a certain kind of advance in the sense of continuing on the same lines; but it is the advance of one who is rushing blindly down a decline toward a precipice. This is the nature of what are called modern ideas, as opposed to Christian ideas.—*Bishop Bellord.*

DECAY RATHER THAN PROGRESS IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Progress there has been in the arts and sciences; but progress in the way of Christian perfection; progress in the practise of the Christian virtues; progress in the art of living soberly, and justly,

and godly in this world it is to be feared there has been none. Rather do we see tokens of decay in the Christian life that were not visible to our forefathers. "My just man liveth by faith," says the Apostle, and, taking the world as a whole, faith does not appear to have grown stronger. On the contrary, outside of the Church, men have in their tens of thousands abjured that faith in the Divine inspiration of the Bible which their forefathers of a century ago cherished as their most precious possesion.—*Bishop A. McDonald.*

RELIGION THE LIFE OF CIVILIZATION

The first need of human society is God. Religion is the life of civilization. This is historically true, inasmuch as Christianity started our present civilization, and supplied the forces which moulded it; and it is proved by the witness of both the Old and New Testament. Those who will not accept that authority may learn the same truth experimentally. Nothing is more evident than that some other influence is required to make civilization a success besides civilization itself. Even the heathen knew this and asked: *"quid leges sine moribus?"* What are laws apart from morals? Of what use are the best of civil and social institutions when manipulated by men without conscience or integrity? Human corruption can turn the best of God's gifts into instruments of evil. The success of civilization depends not so much on the substance of it, as on the manner in which it is carried on. The passions of arrogance, and cruelty, and lust, and greed, need to be restrained, else they become the guiding principles of civilized life, and work out its ruin. The control of these is beyond the function of civilization; it belongs only to religion.—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE FAILURE OF CIVILIZATION

But what are the actual facts? Are the hopes of mankind likely to be realized, or is it not rather the case that, as civilization advances, hopes give way to disappointment? The promises have been high enough to satisfy anyone, but there is no fulfilment. Every advantage gained seems to have some curse attached to it. Every evil seems to increase. Human nature has not changed, and life goes on in much the same way as ever. Man is still subject to the law of toil and suffering; we have the poor still with us; sin still prevails, and with it misery.

The actual state of the world is an extraordinary problem; it is so unexpected, so unaccountable, according to prevailing ideas, and so self-contradictory. It is full of extremes. Those who know one side of it can hardly believe in the other. Civilization is at the same time the greatest of blessings and the greatest of curses; it promises a magnificent future, and it threatens universal destruction; it raises and enriches those who are above a certain level; all who are below that level it degrades and crushes into mere abject misery. It has been well said that "Our present type of society is in many respects one of the most horrible that has ever existed in the world's history—boundless luxury and self-indulgence at one end of the scale, and at the other a condition of life as cruel as that of a Roman slave, and more degraded than that of a South Sea Islander."

—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE INSTABILITY OF CIVILIZATION

Those civilizations were of as good promise as ours, but there was an appointed limit which they could not pass. They did not continue; they withered like autumn leaves, and disappeared almost as completely. "The earth is the grave of dead civilizations as well as of men" (Devas); as we scrape its surface we are discovering each day memorials of the great power and high cultivation of royal races whose very memory has perished. Other nations come; in some cases they may take up the former civilization and carry it on in their own fashion; more frequently they begin again afresh and soon surpass their predecessors. We have no assurance that our civilization will not die out in its turn. It would be a fit ending for our pride were it to be humbled to the dust, and all our grandeur hidden from the knowledge of future generations under six feet of vegetable mould.—*Bishop Bellord.*

PROTESTANTS ON THE CHURCH AND CIVILIZATION

No human ingenuity is capable of estimating what modern civilization owes to the great Catholic Church.—*Governor Swanson.*

And I am happy to pay tribute to that Church which you represent, as one of the greatest forces for order and civilization.—*Ex-Speaker Cannon.*

The crowd of unknown Saints whose names fill the calendars mainly represent the age of heroic spiritual ventures, of which we see glimpses of St. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany; of St. Columban and St. Gall wandering from Ireland to reclaim the barbarians of the Burgundian deserts and of the shores of the Swiss lakes. It was among men like these—men who were termed emphatically "men of religion"— that the new races first saw the example of life ruled by a great and serious purpose, which yet was not one of ambition, or the excitement of war; a life of deliberate and steady industry, of hard and uncomplaining labour, a life as full of activity in peace, of stout and brave work as a warrior's was wont to be in the camp, on the march, in battle. It was in these men and in the Christianity which they taught, and which inspired and governed them, that the fathers of our modern nations first saw exemplified the sense of human responsibility; first learned the nobleness of a ruled and disciplined life; first enlarged their thoughts of the uses of existence; first were taught the dignity and sacredness of honest toil. These great axioms of modern life passed silently from the special homes of religious employment to those of civil; from the cloisters and cells of men who, when they were not engaged in worship, were engaged in field work, or book work—clearing the forest, extending cultivation, multiplying manuscripts—to the guild of the craftsman, to the shop of the trader, the study of the scholar. . . . It was the power and sanction of religion and a creed which first broke men into their yoke that now seems so easy.—*Dean Church (Non-Cath.)* in *Influences of Christianity Upon National Character.*

From the fifth to the thirteenth century the Church was engaged in elaborating the most splendid organization the world has ever seen. Starting with the separation of the spiritual from the temporal power, and the mutual independence of each in its own sphere, Catholicism worked hand in hand with feudalism for the amelioration of mankind. Under the influence of feudalism, slavery became serfdom, and aggressive was modified into defensive war. Under the influence of Catholicism the monasteries preserved learning and maintained the sense of the unity of Christendom. Under the combined influence of both grew up the lovely ideal of chivalry, moulding generous instincts into gallant institutions, making the body vigorous and the soul pure, and welding the Christian virtues of humility and tenderness into the natural grace of courage and strength.

During this period the Church was the one mighty witness for light in an age of darkness, for order in an age of lawlessness, for personal holiness in an epoch of licentious rage.—*Canon Farrar (Non-Cath.)* in *The Victories of Christianity.*

Christianity, so far from belonging to the Dark Ages, was the one path across the Dark Ages that was not dark. It was a shining bridge connecting two shining civilizations. . . . Now can we say that the Church wishes to bring us back into the Dark Ages? The Church was the only thing that ever brought us out of them.
Chesterton (Non-Cath.) in *Orthodoxy.*

THE CHURCH AND POETRY

Longfellow (Non-Cath.)) says of the Catholic devotional poetry of Spain that he knows "of nothing in any modern tongue so beautiful as some of its finest passages. The thoughts spring heavenward from the soul,—the language comes burning from the lip. The imagination of the poet seems spiritualized; with nothing of earth, and all of Heaven,—a Heaven like that of his own native clime, without a cloud, or a vapour of earth, to obscure its brightness"
—Outre-Mer.

THE CHURCH AND ART

Dr. Charles J. Whitby (Non-Cath.), a contributor to the London Academy, affirms that , "In the Middle Ages poets, artists, scholars, and thinkers, were attracted to the Church by an inevitable affinity. The Church assimilated the work of such men, wrought it up into a coherent and more or less harmonious whole, and thus became the organ and the mouthpiece of every form of culture."

THE POPE

THE PRIMACY OF PETER

The Son of God, having willed that His Church should be one, and solidly built upon unity, has established the Primacy of St. Peter to bind it together and cement it, wherefore we recognize that same Primacy in the successors of the Prince of the Apostles, to whom on that account is due submission and obedience, as the holy Councils and the Holy Fathers have ever taught to all the faithful. Surely, if the authors of the pretended Reformation had loved

unity they would not have abolished the government of bishops, which was established by Jesus Christ Himself, and which we see in force from the days of the Apostles, nor would they have despised the authority of the Chair of St. Peter, which has so certain a foundation in the Gospel and a succession so evident in tradition; rather would they have preserved with care the authority of the Episcopate, which establishes unity in the particular Churches, and the Primacy of St. Peter's Chair, which is the common centre of all Catholic unity. . . . This Primacy is a Divine institution, not a mere point of discipline; one of the marks of the Church.—*Bossuet.*

Jesus saith to them: But whom do you say that I am?—Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God.—And Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father who is in Heaven. And I say to thee: that thou art Peter; and upon this Rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven.—Matt. XVI, 15-19.

The Lord said: Simon, Simon, behold satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat.—But I have prayed for Thee that Thy faith fail not: and Thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren.—Luke XXII, 31-32.

THE NECESSITY OF A LEADER

Might we not just as well try to show the necessity of a head to the human body? A body without a head! Nature offers nothing like it. Let the body be human, politic, social, religious: in the collection of units that go to make up the whole, in the various members that compose it, there must be order, unity, harmony, solidity; and there can be none, as there can be no justification for calling such an aggregation of parts a moral whole or entity, without co-ordination of such parts, one principal unit or part emerging as the head or chief. It is a law of nature, based on accidental inequalities and diversity of tastes and aptitudes, that where many are gathered together, one takes the leadership, all follow the lead of one best fitted to direct. The flock, the herd, yields to this law of nature. Where will you find a fold without a shepherd, an army without a captain, a navy without an admiral, a ship-crew without a captain, a state without a chief magistrate? The very school boy becomes a leader of his companions. Even criminals obey this law.—*John H. Stapleton.*

THE POPE DIVINELY APPOINTED

"Is it right that a mere man should hold the place of God over his fellows?" Is it right that any man should hold a position of authority over others in any sphere? If in temporals, why not in spirituals? Worldly rulers are God's lieutenants. Parents are God's vicars. In His sight we are all children and subjects. Why not

delegate His authority in one domain as well as in another! And if He has done so in spiritual matters—as He has—why demand reasons of the fact of Him who is all wise? If God did confer supreme power on Peter and his successors, as we know from Holy Writ that He did, that ought to be sought for any one who believes in an infinite God.—*John H. Stapleton.*

THE POPE, THE VISIBLE HEAD OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

That this visible head was necessary, to establish and preserve the unity of the Church, is the unanimous reasoning and opinion of the Fathers. This St. Jerome both clearly saw and wrote against Jovinian in these words: "One is chosen, that, by the appointment of a head, occasion of schism may be removed" (Lib. I, contr. Jovin. med.); and to Damasus: "Away with envy: let ambition of Roman grandeur retire: I speak to the successor of the fisherman, and the disciple of the Cross. Following no chief but Christ, I am united in communion with your Holiness, that is, with the Chair of Peter: I know that on that rock is built the Church. Whoever eats the lamb outside this house is profane: whoever is not in the ark of Noah shall perish in the flood" (Epist. 57). The same was long before proved by Irenaeus (Adv. Haeret. Lib. iii. c, 3), and by Cyprian (De Simp. Prael. sub. init.), who, speaking of the unity of the Church, says: "The Lord speaks to Peter, 'I say to thee Peter: Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build My Church' (Matt. xvi, 18). He builds the Church on him alone; and although after His resurrection, He gives His own equal power to all the Apostles, saying 'As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost' (John xx, 21, *sq.*); yet, to display unity, He disposed, by His own authority, the origin of this same unity, which has its beginning from one," &c. Again Optatus of Milevis says: "It cannot be ascribed to ignorance on your part, knowing as you do, that the episcopal Chair, in which Peter, the head of all the Apostles, sat, was conferred on him first in the City of Rome; that in him alone the unity of the Chair might be observed by all, and that the other Apostles might not claim each a chair for himself; so that he, who would erect another in opposition to this single Chair, would be a schismatic and a prevaricator" (Lib. 2, ad. Parmen. sub init). In the next place, Basil has left written these words: "Peter was placed in the foundation, because he said: 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God,'" and heard in reply that he was the rock; for, although he was a rock, yet he was not such a rock as Christ, for Christ is truly an immovable rock, but Peter, only by virtue of that rock. For Christ bestows His own dignities on others: He is a priest, and He makes priests; He is a rock, and He makes a rock; and what are His own He bestows on His servants" (Hom. 29). Lastly, St. Ambrose says: "For great are the gifts of God, who not only restored to us what had been ours, but also granted us what are His own." Then, after a few words he proceeds: "But great is the favour of Christ, who bestowed on His disciples almost all His own titles. 'I am,' says He, 'the light of the world' (John viii, 12); and yet with this title in which He Himself glories, He favoured His disciples saying 'You are the light of the world' (Matt. v, 15); 'I am the living bread'

(John vi, 41); and, 'we are all one bread; I am the true vine,' (John xv, 1); and to thee He says: 'I planted thee a fruitful vineyard all true.' 'Christ is a rock, for they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ' (1 Cor. x, 4); and yet the favour of this title He denied not to His disciple, that he also should be Peter" (Matt. xvi, 18), because deriving from the rock the solidity of constancy and the firmness of faith.

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

Should any one object that the Church, content with one head and spouse, Jesus Christ, requires no other beside, the answer is at hand; for, as we have in Chirst the Lord not only the Author of all the Sacraments, but also their inward minister (for He it is that baptizes, and that absolves; and yet He institutes men the external ministers of the Sacraments); so has He placed over His Church, which He governs by His inward spirit a man to be the vicar and minister of His power; for, as a visible Church requires a visible head, so our Saviour appointed Peter head and pastor of the faithful of every sort, when in the most ample terms, He committed to Him His sheep to be fed (John xxi, 15), so that He wished His successor to have the very same power of ruling and governing the whole Church.

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

THE PAPACY AND THE NATIONS

But for the Papacy the Middle Ages would have fallen a prey to barbarity. Even in our day the liberty of nations would be threatened with greatest danger if there were no Papacy. It is the most effective counterpoise to an omnipotent power of the state. If it did not exist, it would have to be invented.—*Hübler (Non-Cath.).*

THE PAPACY AND CIVILIZATION

Napoleon is credited with saying that, if the papacy did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it. It may safely be taken for granted that neither faith nor piety prompted this utterance. It was simply that, with his profound knowledge of men and his common sense, acute to the point of genius, he saw for the spiritual world, in the absence of a head to rule and teach, spiritual anarchy and the destruction of the religious idea among civilized peoples—results than which nothing more appalling for the human race can be imagined.—*John H. Stapleton.*

A PROTESTANT'S VIEW OF THE POPE'S INFLUENCE UPON CIVILIZATION

That an astonishing proficiency in the improvement of the human intellect was made during the pontificate of Leo X is universally allowed. That such proficiency is principally to be attributed to the exertions of that pontiff, will now perhaps be thought equally indisputable. Of the predominating influence of a powerful, and accomplished, and fortunate individual, on the character and manners of the age, the history of mankind furnishes innumerable instances; and happy it is for the world, when the pursuits of such individuals, in-

stead of being devoted, through blind ambition, to the subjugation or destruction of the human race, are directed toward those beneficent and generous ends, which, amid all his occupations, Leo the Tenth appears to have kept constantly in view.

—*William Roscoe: Life and Pontificate of Leo X.*

NON-CATHOLIC OPINION ABOUT A POPE

Of Benedict XIV Burke says: "It is well known how little Benedict XIV suffered himself to be dazzled by the elevation of his dignity" (*History of the Popes*); and Voltaire called him "the pride of Rome, the father of the world, who teaches that world by his writings, and honours it by his virtues." It is said, that when Sir Horace Walpole was presented to him and refused to kneel, Benedict said, in his captivating manner, "Kneel down, my son; receive the blessing of an old man: it will do you no harm!" upon which the young traveler with tears in his eyes immediately fell on his knees.

DEFINITION OF PAPAL INFALLIBILITY

The Vatican Council has in clear terms defined what is meant by Papal Infallibility. "We declare and define . . . that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when, exercising his office as pastor and teacher of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals as to be held by the whole Church, then by the Divine assistance, promised to him in the person of the Blessed Peter, he enjoys that same infallibility . . . with which the Divine Redeemer willed His Church to be endowed."

Infallibility, then, is not the same thing as inspiration. It belongs to the Church and the Pope in virtue of a "Divine assistance" guarding from error in the teaching and the exposition of the body of truth once delivered to the Saints. It does not apply to any and every act of Pope or Church; but to teaching concerning faith and morals. Finally, it applies, according to the words of the sacred Council, when a doctrine is taught as binding the universal Church—when the Pope is exercising his office as pastor and teacher of all Christians.

If people would only study the Church's own presentment of her own doctrines, instead of taking the caricatures of them so often put before the mind of man, they would find them to be much more reasonable than they had ever supposed. So it is with this doctrine of infallibility. It is not that tremendous assumption which it is often to be: it does not confer upon him, whose prerogative it is, either sinlessness or freedom from liability to error in everything he may speak about, nor on every occasion on which he may speak. It is simply the power to do that which we should have expected Our Divine Lord to have provided for—to hand down from age to age, unsullied and pure, to expound correctly and interpret rightly, the truth that makes us free, the truth upon which our salvation depends, and that we must drink, if we drink at all, from an unpolluted channel, through which no poison of error can reach our immortal souls.—*H. G. Hughes.*

PAPAL INFALLIBILITY

Peter is to hold the keys. This, in nearly every civilized time and country, has ever signified the possession of supreme command. What Peter binds and looses on earth, what he commands or forbids, all his acts of authority, his decisions, his rulings, his government in general, are to be ratified and confirmed by God. "The Jewish way of using the words binding and loosing for 'to prohibit' and 'to permit'," honestly admits the Protestant Dean Alford, "would make the binding and loosing belong to the *power of legislation* in the Church" (*Greek Testament, abridged ed., in loco*).

Do you think that Almighty God would give such powers as this to any man—would bind Himself to confirm all that man's official acts, and yet *so leave that man without Divine guidance, that he might go astray and make mistakes in the exercise of his office?* Would not God, by so acting, be engaging Himself to the ratification of error? You must answer: assuredly He would. But *that* God can not do.—*H. G. Hughes.*

Jesus coming spoke to them, saying: All power is given to Me in Heaven and in earth.—Going therefore teach ye all nations: baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,—Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.—Matt. XXVIII, 18-20.

If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican.—Matt. XVIII, 17.

WHAT PAPAL INFALLIBILITY DOES NOT MEAN

The infallibility of the Pope does *not* mean that he cannot sin; it does *not* mean that he cannot err in matters of science; it does *not* mean that he cannot err in political matters; it does *not* mean that he cannot err in his personal theological views; it does *not* mean that he cannot err in his private utterances relating to faith or morals; it does *not* mean that he cannot err in his personal decisions; it does *not* mean that he cannot err in his measures concerning the discipline and practice of the Church, for example: sanctioning or dissolving an Order, precepts of worship, ecclesiastical rules, etc.

He that will be proud, and refuse to obey the commandment of the Priest, who ministereth at that time to the Lord thy God, and the decree of the judge, that man shall die, and thou shalt take away the evil from Israel.—Deut. XVII, 12.

When there shall be a controversy the priests shall stand in My judgments and shall judge.—They shall keep My law and My ordinances in all My solemnities and sanctify My Sabbaths.
—Ez. XLIV, 24.

The great Fénélon, proceeding to his pulpit in the cathedral of Cambrai, on Annunciation day in 1699, was handed by his brother

the Roman brief condemning twenty-three propositions of his *Maximes des Saints*. The Bishop took the writing, calmly ascended the pulpit and announced it forthwith, then preached a sermon on the submission due to ecclesiastical superiors, at which the whole congregation was greatly moved. A few days later he announced in an episcopal letter to his diocese his submission, "simple, absolute, and without a shadow of reservation." By this deed, an heroic act of obedience, Fénélon is placed higher in history than by his brilliant works.

The difference between the Protestant and the Catholic manner of reasoning is stated by the convert, Prof. A. von Ruville, as follows:

My mind had harboured up to now the characteristically Protestant thought that I, from my superior mental standpoint, was going to probe the Catholic Church, that I was going to pass an infallible judgment on her truth or untruth, and this in spite of my being ready to acknowledge the truth in her. But now I became more and more conscious of the fact that it was the Church who had a right to pass judgment on me, that I had to bow to her opinion, that she immeasurably surpassed me in wisdom. Many details, which I was inclined to criticize, demonstrated this to me, for in every instance I recognized that it was my understanding that was at fault, and that what appeared to me as an imperfection was rooted in the deepest truth. In this way I was gradually brought to the real Catholic standpoint, to accept the doctrines immediately as Truth, because they proceeded from the Church, and then to endeavour to understand them thoroughly, and to reap from them the fullest possible harvest of Truth. Formerly, with regard to Protestant doctrines, I always retained my independence and the sovereignty of my judgment. Why should I not have had my own opinion, when every denomination and every theologian had an individual opinion? How different with the Catholic Church. Before her sublime, never varying wisdom, as it is proclaimed by every simple priest, I bowed my knees in humility. Compared to her experience of two thousand years my ephemeral knowledge was a mere nothing.—*(Back to Holy Church.)*

Immediate, implicit submission of the mind was, in the lifetime of the Apostles, the only, the necessary token of faith; then there was no room whatever for what is now called private judgment. No one could say: "I will choose my religion for myself, I will believe this, I will not believe that; I will pledge myself to nothing; I will believe just as long as I please, and no longer; what I believe to-day I will reject to-morrow, if I choose. I will believe what the Apostles have as yet said, but I will not believe what they shall say in time to come." No; either the Apostles were from God, or they were not; if they were, everything that they preached was to be believed by their hearers; if they were not, there was nothing for their hearers to believe. To believe a little, to believe more or less, was impossible; it contradicted the very notion of believing: if one part was to be believed, every part was to be believed; it was an absurdity

to believe one thing and not another; for the word of the Apostles, which made the one true, made the other true, too; they were nothing in themselves, they were all things, they were an infallible authority as coming from God. The world had either to become Christian, or to let it alone; there was no room for private tastes and fancies, no room for private judgment.—*Cardinal Newman.*

THE COMMANDMENTS

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The Ten Commandments are the essence and expression of the natural law imposed by the Almighty and All-wise Creator to govern and regulate the conduct of man in accordance with his nature, his obligations, his final end. They are also the rule of all human actions, of all human laws. Civil laws, the precepts of parents, of superiors, that do not conform to the Ten Commandments, are unjust, can impose no obligation, must not be obeyed, for, as the Apostles rightly said: "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts v, 29). When there is a doubt as to the justice of human laws, of human commands, the Church is Divinely empowered to decide whether they may be lawfully obeyed, and her decisions in such matters are binding on the conscience of every one.—*F. Girardey, C.SS.R.*

I will meditate on Thy Commandments, and I will consider Thy ways.—I will think of Thy justifications: I will not forget Thy words.—Ps. CXVII, 15-16.

Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: but he that doth the will of My Father, who is in Heaven, he shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.
—*Matt.* VII, 21.

Submit thyself then to Him, and be at peace: and thereby thou shalt have the best fruits.—Receive the Law of His mouth, and lay up His words in thy heart.—Job XXII, 21-22.

If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.
—*Matt.* XIX, 17.

He who saith that he knoweth Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.—I. *John* II, 4.

Let us all hear together the conclusion of the discourse: Fear God and keep His Commandments: for this is all man.—Eccl. XII, 13.

The keeping of her laws is the firm foundation of incorruption;—And incorruption bringeth near to God.—Wisd. VI, 19-20.

This is the charity of God, that we keep His Commandments and His Commandments are not heavy.—I. *John* V, 3.

If thou will keep the Commandments and perform acceptable fidelity for ever, they shall preserve thee.—Ecclus. XV, 16.

THE COMMANDMENTS AN OBSTACLE TO MANY

Many persons pretend that the Commandments are too difficult to keep. Not a few refuse to believe in the Catholic religion, not so much in truth, on account of its mysteries, as on account of the obligation of keeping the Commandments; were the Church to allow them to act as they like and to dispense them from the observance of the Commandments, they would most readily accept all her doctrines and become Catholics. But were the Church neither will nor can do so, hence they never become Catholics. In the manner some fallen-away Catholics try to justify their course under the plea that they can no longer believe the doctrines they so willingly believed so long as they kept the Commandments and practised their religion; but it is evident that the real reason of their giving up the Faith is that they fear the Commandments and the obligation of suffering, combating and overcoming their weakness in yielding to their passions and transgressing the Commandments. They prefer giving up their Faith to giving up their passions.—*F. Girardey, C.SS.R.*

CONSCIENCE AND COMMANDMENTS

There is a conscience in man that bears witness to a higher law of justice and goodness, a law superior to mere expediency or caprice, or the power which springs from brute force.—*Bishop Spalding.*

CONSCIENCE MUST BE GUIDED

But noble and sublime as is conscience, it must itself be guided and directed. Look at a ship out upon the wave of waters. Whither is it sailing? How shall it reach its goal? What is there to guide it? The mariner will point to the compass. There, the one point tells him how to direct his vessel. But there is a power beyond, that guides the needle, that causes it to point unerringly to the north. If other influences are allowed to interfere, to pollute the needle, then the compass is useless. It is no longer a trustworthy guide. The ship and its crew are lost. Conscience is the needle that points out to us the way of life. Conscience is the needle that points out to us the way. But there is a power which guides the conscience. That power is Truth. Our conscience is guided to our intellect. We must therefore know the truth before we can safely trust to the dictates of conscience. In other words, in act we must have a knowledge of the truth; to do, we must know the law that guides the principles of truth.—*Thomas F. Burke, C.S.P.*

CONSCIENCE NOT INFALLIBLE

Conscience is not infallible, and it is a reliable guide only if correctly informed. A man with a false conscience may commit crimes and consider himself righteous in committing them. St. Paul was as zealous in following the dictates of his conscience before his conversion as after, and he sincerely believed that he was acting rightly in the relentless persecution of the Christians. It is therefore not true if people say their conscience, even without the Faith and without the commandments, enables them to lead a righteous life.

THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE

The voice of conscience is the voice of God; for it is God, the source, the author, nay the very essence of the moral law of right and wrong, who has given to man his reason whereby he can recognize good and evil, and, at the same time, the obligation of doing good and shunning evil. So strongly and deeply is this sentiment rooted in the being of man, that it is vain for us to endeavour to obliterate it. A man may blunt his conscience, may become hardened, may adopt an agnostic attitude, and look upon the moral and ethical teaching which is founded upon the universal voice of conscience as purely an invention of human philosophy; but it may safely be said that no man wholly succeeds in this; in his heart of hearts the worst and the most hardened will retain—he can not help it—that distinction between what is indubitably right and what is wrong, which is founded in the very nature of things, because founded in God Himself. A famous writer of our day has composed a fantastic romance, in which, under the guise of strange and incredible adventures, he holds up to well-served irony certain dangerous teachings and tendencies of the modern world, and utters many a pregnant and ancient truth. One of his characters—a young man—is brought into close connection with a supposed dynamiter, one of those pests of humanity who seek to gain their ends by the indiscriminating slaughter of their fellows. The young man is a professed agnostic. He boasts himself a total disbeliever, not only in revealed religion, but in the data, methods, and conclusions of the whole of ethics. Yet, when it came to dynamite, he found that he had got a conscience after all. He recognized something that was indubitably wrong and horrible from the moral point of view. And in the worst of men, however they may have overlaid their consciences, the still small voice will be heard at times, bearing witness to the fact that, in spite of all their reckless disregard or sophistical theorizing, the moral law exists, supreme, binding, unassailable.—*H. G. Hughes.*

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

THE REFORMATION

Although the causes of the Reformation have been variously given, it is agreed by all that the principal one was that which goes by the general name of "private judgment." Religion, it was maintained, was a matter about which each individual was competent to arrive at the truth by his own unaided reason. Everyone should read the Scripture for himself. Everyone was capable of drawing the proper conclusion from its pages. The plowman at the plow; the weaver at his shuttle; the smith at his forge; the housewife at her spinning wheel, were all endowed with a mind to discriminate, and an intelligence to form an unerring judgment on spiritual things.

In vain did the Church point out the extreme danger of such opinions. Private judgment had its way. Sacred Scripture was read, discussed, disputed about, as a celebrated English historian tells us, in every beer house and tavern. There was no subject howsoever

holy, which did not become the topic of conversation, often ending in high words, often the cause of life-long contention, and always having, as its ultimate result, the one of making confusion more confusing. The astonishing part of the whole matter is that not even the wisest of the disputants would have laid claim to the power of passing a judgment in any other branch of knowledge. They would readily have granted that not they, but the astronomer, the man who had devoted his life to the study of the subject, was alone able to approach somewhere near to the truth about the movement of the stars. The explanation, the meaning of the laws of the land, they willingly left to the lawyer and the judge. They did not pretend to know each man his neighbour's trade and profession better than he knew it himself; and they would have treated with ridicule the assertion that a mechanic from a town must know more about agriculture than the farmer in the country. Only in religious affairs did they consider themselves better qualified to judge than a Church which had been engaged in the work for over fifteen hundred years. In that one matter, of all others so difficult, so mysterious, teeming, so to speak, with so many deep and unfathomable truths, they gravely asserted that everything could be certainly and surely known by the mere perusal of the Scripture itself.

—*John Freeland.*

THE FRUITS OF THE REFORMATION

And this is the issue of three centuries of a boasted reformation, working with its eyes of intelligence and its hands of power. There have been agencies beyond number of operation; Bibles circulated by millions and thrust into every hand, physical progress unexampled in its wide sweep, a fierce straining after a long expected human perfection; license, called liberty, such as the world never saw before; liberty of thought and action, liberty of speech, liberty of the press; the people's will proclaimed as supreme law, independent of all others, and all others dependent on it; the open repudiation of everything supernatural and the severance of all social relations from contact with its ideas and from subjection to its influence; governments ruling without reference to the law of God; Parliaments legislating not in accordance with Christian morality, but in accordance with the new philosophy, and from all these sources, growing and expanding since the Reformation, has come the hard, black issue—the doctrine which formulates the practical belief of the world—no God, no human soul; man sprung originally from a beast, still a beast, to live a beast, to die a beast, and be no more. It is enough to make any heart that loves God, sick unto death to contemplate such a wreck of man's highest, holiest beliefs; it is enough to make us wish that God would free us by death from the mad, appalling blasphemies that are circulated in the world around us as freely as the news of the day.—*P. A. Sheehan.*

LACK OF UNITY IN PROTESTANTISM

Consider the Anglican Establishment. Everything there tends to make unity easy. The members of that National Church are almost all of one race. They all possess the same language, and live under the same form of government. They are already bound

ogether by a thousand bonds. The sovereign is the head of the Church *and* of the nation the bishops are all state officials, re-eiving from five to fifteen thousand pounds a year from the government, and the clergy, for the most part, come from the ame public schools and are brought up in the same way. To any bserver it would seem that everything here made for unity. The British Church ought to be as united as the British Army or the British Navy, since it is quite as national, quite as insular, and quite as truly British.

But, what do we find? Not unity, but endless divisions. The Church of England is broken up into High Church, and Low Church, and Broad Church. And each of these three divisions are subdivided n countless further divisions and subdivisions. Not only the laity, but the clergy, and even the bishops are absolutely disagreed on the most vital points of doctrine, and will give a diametrically opposite interpretation to the selfsame text of Holy Scripture.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

TRUTH AND INTOLERANCE

Phillips Brooks (Non-Cath.) in his lecture on tolerance, tells of a boy of whom the stranger asked the way to Farmington. "It is eight miles," the boy replied. "Are you sure that it is so far as that?" the weary traveler asked. The boy, with his big heart over-running with the milk of human kindness looked at him and replied: "Well, seeing you are pretty tired, I will call it seven miles."

How much of would-be tolerance is sounded in our ears like that! There can be no tolerance of error. No weak sentiment can obtain at the expense of truth.

THE CHURCH TOLERANT

It was reserved to Maryland, founded by a Roman Catholic, to be the first American colony, perhaps the first of Christian States, in which all Christian sects were not merely tolerated, but cordially welcomed.—*Poultney Bigelow (Non-Cath.)* in *The Children of the Nations.*

THE CHURCH INTOLERANT?

They have branded her as intolerant when she was only faithful, they have stigmatized her as relentless when she was only true to the sacredness of her charge. Because she condemned the book, no matter who wrote it, the book which breathed the venom of infidelity, they called her an enemy of letters; because she repudiated the theory which was in germ a heresy, they styled her the foe of science; because she anathematized a principle which led to revolution and anarchy they named her the antagonist of civilization. She has suffered everything in promoting the spiritual, aye, and the temporal well being of the race. She has been a martyr to her mission and her duty. Yet she is an intolerant, a bigoted, an uncompromising institution, and her light is darkness, and her zeal is ambition, and her love is cruelty, and she deserves not a footplace among the habitations of men. When they cry out against her intolerance they hardly know the meaning of their clamour. In one way their reproach is her glory. Yes, she is intolerant, yes, there

are things she will not abide. She will not tolerate error; she will not tolerate atheism or infidelity, or any of the views which aim at the destruction of all religion, of all morality, of all civilization. All the truths of God she must uphold. All the sacred rights of men she will declare and fight for. She believes in liberty, but she is intolerant of license. She believes in fraternity but not in communism. She believes in equality of all men before God, but she respects the conditions in which the race finds itself. She will stand up for all rightful possessions. She will not brook injustice, oppression, or slavery. Poor and rich are alike to her, but woe to the capitalist who defrauds the labourer of his wages, and woe also to the labouring man who rises up in unjust violence against his employer. Yes, the Church is intolerant, but this intolerance is not a badge of shame, but a crown of glory.—*P. A. Halpin.*

CATHOLICS MORE TOLERANT THAN NON-CATHOLICS

A non-Catholic contributor to *The London Standard,* a secular journal, states: "Clauses disinheriting beneficiaries on religious grounds in the wills of Christians are invariably directed against the Roman Catholic Church, and it is a curious and somewhat noticeable fact that, notwithstanding the general feeling that intolerance and Roman Catholicism are somewhat intimately connected, there has not yet come to light a clause in the will of a Roman Catholic disinheriting any of his or her children who shall forsake that Faith or shall marry one out of the Faith."

INTOLERANCE OF NON-CATHOLICS

Abraham Lincoln, writing in 1855 to an old friend, Joshua F. Speed, said: "When the Know-Nothings get control it (the Constitution) will read: 'All men are created equal except Negroes and foreigners and Catholics.' When it comes to this I should prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty—where despotism can be taken pure and without the base alloy of hypocrisy."—*Recollections of Abraham Lincoln, by Ward Hill Lamon.*

THE INQUISITION

We must consider the minds, particularly of the legislators, of the ages when it was in use. It was made the law of the land for the avoidance of what was then thought serious evils to the commonwealth. Medieval society rested upon a foundation of religion, and that religion was the Catholic. There was no other. It had become so interwoven with the society of that time—with its habits, its customs, its occasions grave and gay, its business and its amusements—that religion could not be attacked without attacking society, and society, in defending itself, could easily be made to appear to be defending religion. Much the same condition of affairs in the modern state is to be noticed with regard to the Ten Commandments. Some of these Commandments are still knit with the moral fiber of Protestant nations. A great many of our laws are based upon them. Any infringement of them is resented by the state, not because it is the infringement of a religious law, but because it is

that of a state enactment. Future ages may think that the state is wrong in this; but we can hardly imagine that any future age will accuse the state of wanton cruelty, much less of persecution, because of its zeal for the Ten Commandments.

In a similar manner did the Catholic governments, while defending themselves, seem to be defending the Church.—*John Freeland*

OUT OF THE CHURCH NO SALVATION

What is the exact meaning of the maxim, "Out of the Church no salvation?" The principle of it is admitted by all men who profess any form of religion. It means generally, that there are certain conditions of salvation imposed by Jesus Christ; that among those conditions is a law of belief imposed on the intellect and a certain membership with the body of Christ's followers; and that these conditions bind all who have come to the knowledge of them.—*Bishop Bellord.*

Penalties are for those only who deliberately disobey. The word, "Out of the Church no salvation" is to be viewed as an ordinary law. It is said of ordinary cases and not of exceptions. It is not applicable to those who are outside the scope of the law. It takes no account of those to whom the law has not been promulgated. Any who by no fault of their own are outside the unity of the Catholic Church will be judged by another law, by that which they do know. Penalties are not for the ignorant, but for the disobedient; and disobedience resides in the will, and not in external circumstances which are beyond one's own control. The accidents of birth or education can not be imputed to any one for blame. A person is not disobedient because he has been born outside the Catholic Church; he is not in rebellion to God while, knowing nothing of the religion founded by Jesus Christ, he remains in a false one which he honestly believes to be true. That which would be a grievous sin in an enlightened man, is no sin to him, because, on our supposition, he is not morally responsible for it. "Out of the Church no salvation," means no more than this, that those who know sufficient of the Catholic Church to recognize or suspect her Divine authority and the obligation they are under of submitting to her, and who deliberately disregard the command of God, are guilty of a mortal sin, which separates them from God's kingdom on earth, and will cut them off, unless repented of, from the kingdom of Heaven.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

I meet the following case frequently on the missions to non-Catholics. A Protestant young man becomes convinced of the truth of the Catholic Church. His father threatens to disinherit him. His mother declares it will break her heart if he becomes "a Romanist." His friends laugh at him, and deem him mad, as Festus did St. Paul (Acts xxvi, 24). His sweetheart threatens to leave him forever. It is, indeed, hard to persevere in one's pursuit of the truth when so great a sacrifice is demanded. And yet, conscience must be obeyed.

Relations, friends, love of woman, money—all must be set aside to

be loyal to Christ, who plainly said: "Every one that shall confess me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in Heaven. But he that shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in Heaven" (Matt. x, 32-33).

—Bertrand L. Conway, C.S.P.

WRONG INTERPRETATION OF "OUT OF THE CHURCH NO SALVATION"

The Catholic doctrine is erroneously *assumed* to be as follows: Every one who is not visibly and externally enrolled in the Church and who dies in that state, is lost forever. Christians belonging to all the different sects that have gone off from the one true Church, Jews, Mohammedans, Pagans are excluded from all possibility of salvation. However much or little they knew of Divine revelation, however good the lives they lead, however they may have corresponded with grace and practiced such duties as they knew, not one of them can ever be saved. We are supposed to hold that there is no virtue, no service of God, no grace, outside the visible boundary of the Church. That salvation depends on a more external circumstance beyond the control of most men, on account of birth, education, character, opportunities, things for which they are not responsible. That God, therefore, has created these uncounted millions with no other possibility before them than to be punished with eternal torments.

Such a doctrine is most shocking and blasphemous, it is revolting to the moral sense of mankind; and this is what is attributed to the Catholic Church. But this is no part of the Church's teaching.

—Bishop Bellord.

A CONDITION OF SALVATION

From these various considerations we learn that, with regard to membership in the Church as one of the conditions of salvation, there are two alternatives, viz., the actual visible communion with the Church, or, on the other hand, the completest sincerity in rejecting it.—*Bishop Bellord.*

EVERY RELIGION CONTAINS SOME TRUTH

In every form of religious error there is contained a certain amount of truth. The fault of such religions is not that they deny all truth, but that they have corrupted it or rejected portions of it. They possess a certain amount which has come to them from authentic sources, from primitive tradition, from Judaism, or, as with modern sects, from the Catholic Church. The Christian heretics mostly teach all those doctrines that must be explicitly believed; and their members, if, as is often the case, they are validly baptized, are thereby ordinary subjects of the Catholic Church. They hold Catholic doctrine almost in its entirety; they have received it, although indirectly, from that Church which God appointed to teach it; they believe it because revealed by God. Many lead lives of admirable devotion, benevolence and strict morality. Supposing them to be in thorough good faith they will be saved as members of the Catholic Church. Orthodox Jews possess all that was essential to salvation in past ages. They have all that was revealed up to a certain date; they believe in the Messiah, though they know not

who He is. They are distinguished for their steadfast fidelity to their law, their constancy through centuries of contempt and persecution which their religion has brought upon them. If, as may well be, any are ignorant that the promises have been taken away from Israel, it is easy to conceive that they may fulfil all the conditions of salvation. The Mohammedans have ever been known as, by excellence, the "Infidels." Yet their fanaticism shows their sincerity; and they, if any, can claim the excuse of invincible ignorance.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

CHARITY TOWARDS NON-CATHOLICS

We should be very slow to judge our non-Catholic neighbours. They are, of course, hopelessly wrong. Their Sect or Denomination is absolutely false, and teaches doctrines contrary to God's revealed truth. Yet, they may be where they are through no fault of their own. Heresy may have been their daily food, it may have been drawn in, unconsciously, and as it were, with their mother's milk. They may have always breathed the atmosphere of Protestantism, and have grown up with the idea of their own self-sufficiency and of the inalienable right of every man to the full exercise of his private judgment. In a word, there may be conditions, so numerous, so varied, so unaccountable in their force, so strange in their influence, and so far-reaching in their effects, that it becomes impossible for any living soul to determine how far a non-Catholic is responsible, or whether he be responsible at all, for not accepting the revealed truth in all its integrity and submitting to the Church.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

PREJUDICE OF PROTESTANTS

Dean Stanley (Non-Cath.) is "convinced that Protestantism in general treats Catholics with shameful ignorance and unfairness."

—*Life and Letters.*

Would to God that Protestants, instead of reading and hearing only what is said against us, would hear and read what we have to say for ourselves. These early prejudices, this "human tradition" which "they have received to hold," would be dispersed like the morning mist before before the sun.—*W. Lockhart.*

BAD CATHOLICS, RATHER THAN GOOD, ATTRACT ATTENTION

Bad Catholics are accepted, much more readily than good ones, as the accredited representatives of their religion. Evil is a great deal more obtrusive than good. Humility always cloaks the highest virtue. The majority of those who lead the most Christ-like lives, are, by the very conditions of the highest religious life, secluded from the gaze of mankind. They do not proclaim their good deeds, and as for their personal sanctity, it is a secret hidden in their hearts and known only to God. But evil rises to the surface; and one man of scandalous life draws more attention than one hundred patient followers of the Crucified.—*Bishop Bellord.*

IGNORANCE OF PROTESTANTS ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Rev. J. B. Hemmeson, a Methodist minister of Wolfville, N. S., is quoted as saying: "It is a strange and lamentable fact that

not one Protestant in ten thousand knows the truth about the teaching and practice of the Catholic Church. Many do not know that there was any Christian Church from the first or second century until the Reformation, or for about a thousand four hundred years. And they believe that there was then, virtually, a new Revelation. When a person of common sense wishes to obtain information about anything, whether political, religious, scientific, or it matters not what it may be, he goes to headquarters for authentic information—never to those who seek to destroy, or who are the enemies of what he wishes to study. Not one Protestant in thousands ever seeks information concerning the Catholic Church from Catholic sources. Protestants never think of such a thing as reading Catholic books or periodicals or anything that 'smells of Rome.' I never did; and yet I, of all men, am not a bigot. It is an inborn and fostered prejudice of many generations. But that is not all. Not only are Protestants absolutely ignorant of Catholic teaching, practice and history, but they generally believe a distorted caricature and call it 'Romanism'."

IGNORANCE, OR HATRED OF TRUTH?

Much of the ignorance about the Church among men is the result of moral transgressions which make the soul incapable of seeing the truth. A great deal that claims to be sincere ignorance is sheer hatred of the truth. Many know the truth and will not acknowledge it. Very many more have received some inkling of the truth; some of them yield to negligence and allow themselves to be occupied by less important things; others shrink from a fuller knowledge because they know they will be convinced; and they vainly suppose that a deliberately chosen ignorance will shield them from the responsibility of disobeying the voice of God.—*Bishop Bellord.*

UNWELCOME TRUTH NOT ACCEPTED

There is abundant reason for believing that great numbers, the majority perhaps, of those to whom an unwelcome truth is revealed, will refuse to accept it and prefer falsehood. It is easy to do this.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

SLANDER IS NOT PROOF

Because so many speak against the Catholic religion, and it has been given a bad name, that is no proof that it is not right. The Jews said worse of the early Christians, and of our Lord Himself.

—*W. Lockhart.*

THE CREDULITY OF UNBELIEF

They talk of our credulity, who believe in the possibility of miracles, but there is nothing like the blank credulity of unbelief. He who has taken in the character of Christ and the idea of the Gospel as a whole, in which we find united the heavenly exaltation of a God-Man and the earthly humiliations of a crucified God, and attributes this to man's invention, would seem to have attained the acme of credulity; but what shall we say when he informs us that this system was a great success, and became the religion of the world without miracles, or else that it is the holiest system which

the world has ever seen, and the exhaustive effort of human genius, but that its founders were either mad fanatics or conscious impostors, or a mixture of both, but that all alike, deceivers and deceived, suffered and died for a lie or an imposture? And they did this willingly and must have known beforehand that such must certainly be their fate, since they set themselves to oppose the fiercest passions and prejudices of human nature and of religious fanaticism: whereas they could have had no means of knowing that their cause would survive them. Certainly, we are forced to say that those who can believe this have indeed turned away their minds from truth and are turned to fables.—*W. Lockhart.*

THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

CHURCH AND STATE

In matters political God has laid down for Christians a certain line of conduct; to render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, to be subject to higher power for conscience sake, recognizing it as a delegation of God's own authority; to endure with patience when that power is abused and turned to our oppression; to render homage even to wicked and unjust rulers, and to leave the rest in the hands of God.—*Bishop Bellord.*

OBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY

St. Augustine exhorts the faithful even to disregard disability and injustice in their superiors, to disregard their worthiness or worthlessness, and have in mind the fact that the same God who gave a kingdom to the pious Augustus, also made a Nero emperor; the same God who placed the crown upon gentle Titus also put the sceptre into the hand of cruel Domitian; the same God who elevated the zealous Constantine to the throne also gave rulership to the apostate Julian. They all will have to give an account to the King of Kings as to how they filled their office, how they used the power that God placed in their hands. All will appear before His tribunal. For many thousands of years emperors, kings and princes have ruled the people of the Lord, and for each of them the hour came when they had to lay down the crown and respond to the summons, "Give an account of thy stewardship."

What an example of obedience and of love of justice is given to all by the Theban Legion! "We are your soldiers, sire," they said to Maximian, who wished to make them persecute the Christians; "but we are also the servants of God: to you we owe military service, to God our innocence. We can not obey your orders if opposed to His; so long as nothing is asked of us that can offend Him, we shall continue to obey you as hitherto; otherwise we must obey Him rather than you." And, indeed, they allowed themselves to be put to death rather than execute the unjust commands of the emperor.

—*History of the Church.*

Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.—1 *Peter* II, 18.

Admonish them to be subject to princes and powers, to obey at a word, to be ready to every good work.—Tit. III, 1.

RELIGION THE BASIS OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

In fact we must make religion the basis of our political economy. This view is most unpopular. While all mankind acknowledges the beauty of our Lord's unselfishness and unworldliness, very few outside the Catholic Church will admit that His life as revealed in the Gospels is a desirable model for those who live a busy working life in the world. Even ministers of professedly Christian sects have said that society could not be carried on for a week on the principles of the Sermon on the Mount. Political economists insist that selfishness and greed are the very mainsprings of invention, industry, and prosperity, and that humility, contentment, disinterestedness, self-sacrifice are hostile to the due production and distribution of wealth. The Catholic Church, as the source of these virtues, is therefore, from the point of view of most economists, the enemy of human progress. They can allege with truth that Christian principles have fallen into complete disrepute with all those who write about or conduct worldly affairs, and they assume therefore that these principles are impracticable. But God can answer as of old: "I will leave me seven thousand men in Israel whose knees have not bowed before Baal" (III. Kings xix, 18). We can point to thousands of religious communities in every age, and more of them now probably than in any past age, which regulate themselves and their temporal affairs according to the law of Christ in its extremist form; we can point to the success they have met both in their internal relations and their relations with the outer world, to the absence in their case of those evils which beset all communities which act on unchristian principles, to the happiness they diffuse, their good order, and the economical benefits they have conferred on human society. I speak of the monastic system.

—Bishop Bellord.

POLITICAL IDEAS LEADING TO RELIGIOUS IDEAS

Père Lacordaire tells us that he returned to the Christian faith through social belief. "Many think it unaccountable that I should have been led back to religious ideas by means of political ideas. The further, however, I advance the more natural does this seem to me."

THE STATE OF WEALTH

God has called certain persons to the state of power and wealth, not through their own deserts or for their own advantage, but in order that they might render special services to Him and to human society. Their position has not been given to them to excite them to arrogance and contempt of others, nor to enable them to live apart from the rush of the world's work in a serene, lofty, exclusive sphere of their own. Their power is not given to them that they may oppress the poor, or combine to increase their own wealth by robbing the toilers, or exact from them a larger return than their labour produces, or create solitudes for their own pleasures by casting out

hundreds and refusing them the right to live and labour and draw their sustenance from their mother earth. Their wealth is not given to them in absolute irresponsible ownership to be hoarded up or squandered as caprice and extravagance may dictate. They are stewards and trustees rather than owners of their wealth. They are accountable to God and man for the proper and unselfish use of the advantages they have received. The civil laws at times restrain a man's ownership in the interest of his family or his fellow citizens; the Divine law puts a restraint on ownership, under eternal penalties, in the interests of God and human society.

The rich are bound to be moderate in the enjoyment of their wealth and to restrain the excess of their desires, remembering that as men they, like the poor, have no absolute claim to more than is sufficient for good and decent life. They are not indeed bound to live as do the poor; they may allow themselves many things as suitable to their station, which would be superfluity and luxury to many other men, for "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out thy corn on the floor" (Deut. xxv, 4). But any excessive extravagance is a sinful misappropriation of goods not their own.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

There is not a more wicked thing than to love money, for such a one setteth even his own soul to sale because, while he liveth, he hath cast away his bowels.—Ecclus. X, 10.

Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out thy corn on the floor.—Deut. XXV, 4.

Set not thy heart upon unjust possessions, and say not: I have enough to live on: for it shall be of no service in the time of vengeance and darkness.—Ecclus. V, 1.

Wo to him that buildeth up his house by injustice, and his chambers not in judgment: that will oppress his friend without cause, and will not pay him his wages!—Jer. XXII, 13.

Wealth is one of the natural goods of life, and one of the great instruments of religious works, especially the works of corporal mercy. Riches are not evil in themselves, but only the trusting in riches. But so generally does the trusting in riches follow on the possession of riches, that Our Lord is able to say of the rich as a class that they can hardly enter into the kingdom of God.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

A considerable amount of wealth ought to go back to the classes from whom it originally came; and that not in the wages of ordinary circulation—value given for value received—but as a tribute due. Turning to nature we find the rivers bringing down their treasure of limpid water to be lost in the ocean; but the sea returns it all, giving it up first in vapours to the clouds to be deposited on the mountains, which again feed the river heads. The earth yearly gives up to us

its wealth in food for the myriad armies of man and beast and bird; but the energy which has gone forth from it has to be restored in labour and irrigation and fertilization. So is it with the rich man. He receives from the community many privileges which he has not earned, he receives without an equivalent the fruits of the surplus labour of many of his fellow men; he has received artificial rights to those fruits, created by the laws, and continued long after the original justification for them had ceased.—*Bishop Bellord.*

Thou shalt not refuse the hire of the needy and the poor, whether he be thy brother, or a stranger that dwelleth with thee in the land, and is within thy gates:—But thou shalt pay him the price of his labour the same day, before the going down of the sun, because he is poor, and with it maintaineth: lest he cry against thee to the Lord, and it be reputed to thee for a sin.—Deut. XXIV, 14-15.

He that oppresseth the poor, to increase his own riches, shall himself give to one that is richer, and shall be in need.—Do no violence to the poor because he is poor, and do not oppress the needy in the gate:—Because the Lord will judge his cause, and will afflict them that have afflicted his soul.—Prov. XXII, 16, 22-23.

If any man hath done any work for thee, immediately pay him his hire, and let not the wages of thy hired servant stay with thee at all.—Tob. IV, 15.

It is most desirable that there should be a great reserve of wealth held in store among a community. If each man earned and held only enough for to-morrow's needs, then any irregularity or dislocation of industry would cast all into absolute want. There must be accumulated capital if vast bulks of commodities are to be purchased in one country and transferred to another, prepared in advance and held in readiness for emergencies. If property were all divided to-morrow—while the shares would be so small that none would profit much—there would be an end of commerce at once; we could no longer obtain the production of other lands, and a deficiency of material for food or labour in one place could not be promptly made good from another. Capital is an ocean of varying depth, but maintaining a uniform level of commodities in every part of the world: exchange of commodities without capital would be much like transport in a mountainous country, by canals with many locks, and intermittent rivers full of shoals, and portages, and rapids.

Again, great works, such as railways and manufactures, could not be undertaken unless there were large sums of money, not required for immediate wants, which could be used for directing large amounts of labour to one object, and maintaining the labourers till the wealth created by them is complete and exchangeable for consumable wealth. Only a small part of labour is immediately productive; and human work would be limited to that kind, were it not that some possess more wealth than they can use themselves, and so can employ it on enterprise that will not make an immediate return.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

DUTIES OF WEALTH

Pope Leo XIII teaches that "Whoever has received from the Divine bounty a large share of temporal blessings, whether they be external and corporal, or gifts of the mind, has received them for the purpose of using them for the perfecting of his own nature, and, at the same time, that he may employ them, as the steward of God's Providence, for the benefit of others." Pope Pius X has declared the same truth. "An obligation of charity," he says, "rests on rich men and holders of property to help the poor and needy according to the Gospel precept; and so grave is this precept that on the day of Judgment, according to Christ Himself, a special reckoning will be made of its fulfilment."

WORK

Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work: with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life.—In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken.—Gen. III, 17, 19.

He that followeth idleness shall be filled with poverty.
—Prov. XXVIII, 19.

Six days shalt thou labour, and shalt do all thy works.—Ex. XX, 9.

The labourer is worthy of his hire.—Luke X, 7.

If any man will not work, neither let him eat.—For we have heard there are some among you who walk disorderly, working not at all, but curiously meddling.—II Thess. III, 10-11.

For there is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man that actually and earnestly works. . . . The blessed glow of labour in him, is it not as purifying fire, wherein all poison is burned up, and of sour smoke itself there is made bright blessed flame!—*Carlyle (Non-Cath.)* in *Past and Present.*

THE BLESSING OF WORK

God made man, for man's own good, to labour, to toil, and in some mysterious way has made his happiness and contentment in life dependent thereon. None so wretched as the idle, none so miserable as those who try to turn life into a dream or a pastime. Nothing can be held or gained without labour, and so far from complaining of being compelled to work for a livelihood, we ought rather to praise and bless God for thus preserving us from the danger and misery of idleness. Hunger, thirst, poverty, and fatigue, often regarded as a curse, are only healthy stimulants to God-ordained work. The happy and contented man is he who makes good use of his mental and bodily powers—the very instruments given him by God for work.
—W. Graham.

THE CONDITION OF LABOUR

The things of earth cannot be understood or valued aright without taking into consideration the life to come. . . . As for riches and the other things which men call good and desirable, whether we have them in abundance or lack them altogether, so far as eternal happiness is concerned it matters little; the only important thing is to use them aright. . . . Therefore those whom fortune favours are warned that freedom from sorrow and abundance of earthly riches are no warrant for the bliss that shall never end, but rather are obstacles; that the rich should tremble at the threatenings of Jesus Christ and that a most strict account must be given to the Supreme Judge for all we possess.—*Pope Leo XIII.*

EQUALITY

The Christian view is grounded on, and helps to maintain, the doctrine of the natural equality of all mankind. Outside of religion men may declaim about equality, but they will never establish it. Theoretical and legal equality will never make men socially and practically equal, as long as wealth is held in supreme honour and poverty in contempt. The Catholic Church alone has the power to give the poor man his due place in human society, civil and religious; she makes him respected and contented, and gives him compensation for the hardness of his lot; this she does because to her alone has God given the blessedness of understanding concerning the needy and the poor.—*Bishop Bellord.*

POVERTY

But he that has received fewer must not be troubled, nor take it ill, nor envy him that is more enriched; but attend rather to Thee, and very much praise Thy goodness for that Thou bestowest Thy gifts so plentifully, so freely, and so willingly, without respect of persons. All things are from Thee, and, therefore, Thou art to be praised in all. Thou knowest what is fit to be given to every one: and why this person hath less, and the other more, is not our business to decide, but Thine, who keepest an exact account of the merits of each one.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

We are happy when the Lord places us in a condition to honour His poverty by ours; we are then under the happy necessity of depending in all things on Divine Providence. We have a thousand opportunities of relying on His bounty, of sympathizing with the miseries of the poor, and of practicing many acts of patience, humility, mortification, and conformity to the will of God.—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

The Christian view of poverty is, that it is a state of economical and spiritual benefit to men. The world rejects this view; it does not care about the spiritual aspect, and considers that economical poverty is an evil. This false view has produced endless practical evils; all speculations about poverty have, in consequence, been vain, all schemes frustrated, all remedies useless. Men hope to destroy poverty; they might as well attempt to dry up the ocean. They endeavor to alleviate its ills, but they can only touch its outskirts; and,

after all is done, poverty remains deeper and more hopeless than ever —a greater problem and a greater danger. The Christian view brings about a very different result. It causes respect for the poor, recognising their state as a respectable one and not degraded; not exceptional but the normal state of the majority of men.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

To many of you, perhaps, it will sound a strange and novel Gospel that our highest reverence is due not any longer to wealth or strength, physical or intellectual, but to poverty, and weakness, and suffering. The witchery of the world at times will cast a strange glamour over us, but if it has not altogether blinded us, the light of God's revelation will shine through, and in that light the Gospel that I have spoken of stands out in its truth and beauty. For is it not written that the God of this universe adopted, elevated, and sanctified the state of poverty; that He chose a stable for His birthplace, with the beasts of the field for His nurses, and a scaffold for His deathbed, with malefactors for His companions, and the lowliest of virgins to be His mother, and the poorest of artisans to be His reputed father, and rude, weak, illiterate fishermen to be the bearers of His name and mission to the world? No palatial residences had He. "The foxes have their holes, and the birds of heaven have their nests, but the Son of Man hath not whereon to lay His head." No purple or fine linen, but the one seamless garment which His mother wove. No sumptuous repasts. A little honey and fried fish were to Him and His disciples a luxury. And in His last agony, when the fever of suffering wrung from Him those words, "I thirst," there was no friend near to give the dying God one drop of water.

—*P. A. Sheehan.*

Ever since Christ chose poverty as His share, it has had its enthusiastic lovers, enamoured by its beauty and fairness. St. Francis of Assisi made poverty his beloved bride and wedded himself to his Lady Poverty for life, retaining for her a loyalty and tender affection, that have never been excelled. He speaks of his Lady Poverty in terms of endearment and exquisite devotion. Numerous are the followers of the Seraphic Saint, who, like him, renounced wealth and all that wealth can give, to imitate more perfectly our Saviour in His complete self-abasement. It is this fact that has reconciled the poor, inspired by Christian sentiments, to their lot and made them find in poverty a happiness and consolation which all the wealth of the world could not give them.—*C. Bruehl.*

"THE POOR" SHOULD NOT MEAN "PAUPERS"

The very poor, those who are downright, hideously poor, have every right to cry out against and complain of their poverty. When Our Lord said: "Blessed are the poor," He did not mean: "Blessed are the paupers." He meant men who owned boats and fishing-nets. The pauper then should allow the community no rest until he is on friendly terms with a little more of the mammon of iniquity. He ought not to be content with pauperism because, normally speaking, pauperism is a hindrance both to bodily and spiritual welfare. A

Saint could put up with it, and utilize it. But its tendency on the normal man and woman is to hinder their well-being.—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE CHURCH OF THE POOR

In the first ages Christianity was esteemed the creed of slaves and outcasts by the lordly pagans of the empire. In later times the Catholic Church has been held contemptible for being the creed of the poor and the ignorant, the creed of women and children, and not the creed of the arrogant and the independent, the successful politician, and the speculator in millions. It is actually despised because it fulfils the prophecy of Jesus Christ, "The poor shall have the Gospel preached to them."—*Bishop Bellord.*

CONTENTMENT

The Eastern legend tells us of the wise man who ate garden stuff to appease his hunger. He said to himself, "Surely there is no one in the world more wretched than I." But, as he turned around, he beheld another man eating the leaves which he had thrown away. None of us is so poor that he cannot behold others less favoured. It is the part of wisdom to try and behold our blessings rather than our afflictions.

Were it not for the Catholic Church in New York City, life would not be worth living. It does infinitely more than any one other agency to bring contentment into the lives of the people.

—*The Sun (New York).*

TRUE CONSOLATION ONLY IN RELIGION

The great European war has brought it home anew in numberless instances that true consolation is found only in religion. In Germany the letter carriers were directed by the Government whenever they had letters or parcels returned from the front as undeliverable, on account of the death of the soldier, they were to ascertain to what church or parish the mother or widow of the man belonged, and to hand the letter or parcel to the priest or minister for returning it to the sender, so that the sad message might be conveyed by the one best fitted to offer consolation.

LIBERTY

The word "liberty" has only too often been misinterpreted or misapplied, and, as a consequence, the minds of men have in many instances given it a meaning which is entirely erroneous. We need but glance at numerous schemes that have, at various times, been concocted by those who have professed to labour in the sacred cause of freedom; we need but look around us to-day and examine many of the theories of political, social, and economic life to find that one of the misconceptions prevalent is that liberty is incompatible with law. If man be supreme, if he owes allegiance to no power beyond himself, if the dictates of intelligence and conscience be merely the voices of the wind coming from nowhere, then human liberty would necessarily consist in exemption from all restraint and from all law. But if, on the other hand, the very nature of man compels us to

recognize the existence of One to whom man is bound to be obedient; to recognize in the commanding voices that speak within the breast of man, dictates implanted by the Author of all things, then human liberty can never exist apart from and dissociated from the restraints of law. On the contrary, liberty supposes law. Paradoxical though it may at first appear, the word of Goethe, which but echoes Catholic teaching, is true: "Only in law can the spirit of man find freedom." The same thought found expression in the words of our late Pontiff, when he said, "Nothing more foolish can be uttered or conceived than the notion, that because man is free by nature he is therefore exempt from law. Were this the case, it would follow that to become free, we must be deprived of reason, whereas the truth is that we are bound to submit to law precisely because we are free by our very nature."—*Thomas F. Burke, C.S.P.*

RELIGION AND THE MATERIAL WELFARE OF MANKIND

Religion and holiness are most profitable as a stimulus to labour, and so to the production of wealth. Those who are spiritual are not so narrow-minded as men of the world; they do not exclude from cultivation that side of human nature which they consider the less important; they are not intolerant of it; on the contrary, they regard earthly labour as a Divine ordinance to be observed as thoroughly as the ordinance for sanctifying their souls. Their motto is *laborare et orare,* labour and pray. They are placed almost on the same level; at any rate they are inseparable. Even those who aspired to the greatest perfection and separated themselves from the world, did not exempt themselves from doing duty to society. In their seclusion they alternated meditation with useful manual labour. None have been more faithful labourers than the members of religious Orders, "the lazy monks," as they are so often called. Among them were no strikes, no demands for higher pay, no squandering of their earnings on self-indulgence, no neglect of work for excessive recreation and holidays, no looking forward to retiring from their laborious lot. They were the pioneers of industry in the Old World.

Another utility of religion consists in the works of benevolence which it has inspired. Look at the hospitals, the asylums, the schools, the associations for aiding prisoners, restoring the fallen, saving foundlings, visiting the poor, nursing the sick. There is hardly a single one, out of tens of thousands of institutions for the relief of human wants, that has not originated in the mind of some holy man or woman. If religion and all its natural good works were to perish to-morrow off the face of the earth, how few of such institutions would remain, and how much the great mass of unrelieved misery would increase!

Under the same head we may place the comfort, the encouragement, the restraint, the contentment, the guidance, which religion and the influence of saintly persons diffuses in the world. Surely this conduces more to human happiness, and indeed to material well-being than any mechanical invention. These are services which can not be estimated in money, which are not investments, and do not figure in statistics of a country's wealth. Yet can any one say that the prosperity of a country is not increased by the daily millions of

such intangible services rendered by holy lives to the commonwealth?

There is another utility in holy lives less visible than the foregoing but not less important; this would vindicate their character as benefactors of the working world even if they did nothing else. In the midst of the throng of sinful men whose deeds are forever calling down the vengeance of God, there are numerous unpresuming unnoticed ones, whose holiness and whose prayers hold back the punishments that are ready to descend, and bring down a blessing on human labours. Terrible were the penalties of old inflicted on sin—the deluge, the destruction of Sodom, the extermination of the nations of Palestine, the captivities and final dispersion of the Jews. We look at the awful abominations of the great cities of the civilized world, and we wonder that the earth does not open and swallow them up. Is God indifferent? Has He grown used to the sight of sin? No. But the prayers of the Saints on earth, and the unceasing oblations on the altars of the Church, are saving the world from the chastisement it deserves.—*Bishop Bellord.*

SECRET SOCIETIES

THE DANGER OF FREEMASONRY

Would it be an exaggeration to assert that the vast majority of Masons in our country deem the lodge a "good enough religion" for themselves? It would not. Many do not realize the danger or do not estimate at its true value this opposition offered to religion by the secret society habit of supplanting it in the human heart.—*J. W. Sullivan.*

WHY THE CHURCH IS OPPOSED TO FREEMASONS

The answer of Archbishop Spalding, of Baltimore, to a Mason's letter, inquiring why the Catholic Church condemns the Order, is most important, as it gives the key to the situation. "This is done," says he, "for many reasons, chief among which is the fact that Masonry is the very best human and natural counterfeit aiming to supersede our Divinely revealed and supernatural religion." In other words, the Church is not so much opposed to Masonry as Masonry is opposed to the Church, for it attempts to do that for which she has been Divinely commissioned.—*J. W. Sullivan.*

THE MASONIC ORDER A RELIGIOUS SECT

In 1905 one Master-Mason of New York City admitted to his lodge a noted gambler. Suspension from the Order was the punishment meted out for the indiscretion. A request for a charter to form a new lodge was made by him. The petition was denied. Unwilling to submit to what he regarded as harsh treatment, the master took the matter into the Civil Courts and won his case. An appeal to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court was made by the Masonic Order. The authority of the Order must be maintained, it must therefore manifest its true character. "It is unconstitutional for the civil authorities to interfere," claimed the representative of the Order, as quoted in the New York *Herald*. "It is unconstitutional,

for the Masonic Order is a religious sect. It is a sect with its ritual, its creed, its cult, just as much a sect as the Lutherans, the Methodists, the Roman Catholics," Can aught be plainer? Is there no danger that he who joins such an Order will deem it a good enough religion for himself? Is there no opposition in this to the religion of our Holy Mother, the Church?—*J. W. Sullivan.*

OATHS OF SECRET SOCIETIES

The oaths administered by the secret societies, and especially the Freemasons, are both rash and unjust oaths; for the members swear obedience to unknown superiors, to obey unknown orders and commands. It is not surprising, then, that the Supreme Pontiffs have so often condemned these societies and stigmatized the oaths they take.
—*Guillois.*

SOCIALISM

SOCIALISM

The word Socialism may indicate very various things. There is the Socialism which is immoral and unchristian, which declares that "Property is robbery," and which would rectify inequalities by seizing on all wealth and dividing it among all men. There is a doctrinaire Socialism, which has its plans carefully elaborated on paper without taking account of human nature. It disregards the law that a social system must be developed from the living organism of society, and can not be manufactured brand-new for the occasion out of the brain of an amateur. Then there is the Socialism of responsible statesmen who yield bit by bit to the requirements of the multitudes. This is founded, not on any deep, true principles, but on present material interests; it proceeds sometimes on right and sometimes on wrong lines, and at the best only does imperfectly what Christianity would have done in the natural course had it not been impeded. Finally there is a Christian Socialism, grounded on the equality of all men as declared by God, on brotherly love, and on the right of every man to receive a proper subsistence in return for honest labour.
—*Bishop Bellord.*

The spirit of revolt has spread throughout the nations with such virulence that serious thinkers are growing anxious for the ordered continuance of society. Nor can these fears be called unfounded. When all allowance has been made for the exaggeration of alarmists, and when every period of unrest in the world's history has been passed in review before our eyes, we shall find, I fear, that there are symptoms at present so grave, that we must be pardoned if we look upon them as quite unprecedented.

For, first, the discontent is more widespread, more universal, more deep-seated. It is more clamorous in its appeal, more menacing in its attitude, more unreasonable in its demands, more unscrupulous in its methods, more intolerant of delay, more disdainful of consequences. And, secondly, it is associated with, or indeed largely generated by, a bewilderment in the domain of religion and philosophy, which bids fair to upset the ethics of ages. The very Deca-

logue is being inverted, and in the name of progress men are tampering with the moral principles that underlie our civilization.

Doubt is now a virtue, Faith a cowardly adherence to fond illusions; marriage is a slavery, honourable maternity a burden intolerable to emancipated womanhood; reverence for or submission to authority is mean servility. Even youth is restive. Our young "Sons of Freedom" are publishing their Declaration of Independence before they can well spell it, and cutting the connection with father and mother before they have learned to shave. Women is in revolt against restrictions that, if they curtailed her liberty, helped to shield her weakness and to enhance her dignity.—*P. J. Gannon, S. J.*

Socialism in some form is not of itself necessarily unchristian or anti-social, but only in some of those vagaries which beset every great movement, and which fall aside as fuller light is cast on the subject. But it is an uprising of the popular conscience against those false maxims of the world which have obscured certain great religious truths. It is an incoherent demand for certain Christian rights which have been set aside by pride of race, and of class, and by the inordinate desire of riches. Unfortunately, in many instances, it is an attempt to realize the results of Christianity without the spirit of Christianity. It sometimes seeks to establish by paper organization and minute rules those relations between men which can only proceed from hearts transformed by faith, and generosity, and justice, into the likeness of Jesus Christ. It is a stirring in the right direction, but unfortunately by the wrong methods. We should show pity to the disinherited for what they have lost, sympathy with their efforts to recover it, and give practical aid in pointing out their errors and helping them to better methods.—*Bishop Bellord.*

Some think and say, "Times have changed. We must change with them." If Christ were living, He would still go to the Garden of Olives. If such saintly leaders as St. Benedict, St. Bernard, St. Ignatius, St. Francis, St. Augustine and St. Dominic were living, they would still follow Jesus into the interior of the Garden, and watch and pray with Him. What America needs is sincere, whole-souled, religious men, leaders, generals, lights of the world, salt of the earth. As these men of God solved the great social and religious problems of their own day, thus they would solve them to-day, if they were living. The spirit of the world has entered the convents, weakening religious life and religious influence.

—*C. H. Thuente, O. P.*

THE CHURCH THE BULWARK AGAINST SOCIALISM

Few men appreciate the great services which the Catholic Church is rendering in staying the rising tide of Socialism. The leaders of that Church grasp their danger, and the country owes a debt of gratitude for the activity that comes from the Catholic Church to educate its citizens upon the menace of Socialism.

—*The Quincy Whig (Non-Cath.).*

I regard the Catholic Church as *the* great bulwark in the United States against the bad features of Socialism and anarchy, and for the upholding of law and order.—*Max Pam (Non-Cath.)*.

SOCIALISTIC AND COMMUNISTIC EXPERIMENTS

During the nineteenth century the United States was repeatedly the scene of communistic experiments. Daring adventurers assembled people and founded settlements on communistic principles, private property being abolished. In 1824, Robert Owens founded a colony in Indiana, which soon grew to nine hundred members, living in the fashion of atheistic communism. In 1825 the colony adopted its first constitution, which within the following year suffered six complete revisions. In June of the second year the last members of the colony ate their farewell dinner together. The experiment had come to a speedy termination. A Frenchman, Etienne Cabet, founded, in 1848, a new colony in Texas, called Icaria. Soon it numbered 500 members. Each family had its small homestead. Children were educated by the community. Amusement was provided for by a band and a theatre; a library supplied the intellectual wants. But soon it all fell into decay. Cabet departed and died. In 1895 the newspapers reported the dissolution of the last remnant of the colony. Such is the fate of experiments. Daring adventurers may undertake them. The lecturer at college, too, will be readily pardoned for his eagerness to take up the cudgel in defence of what is ne win his profane science; he may easily correct himself. But the Church, the Teacher of the centuries and of the nations, in the sphere of religion and morals, has not the right to experiment. Here where mistakes may entail the direst consequences, the rule must be: slowly onward, to keep the whole from ruin. Cardinal Benedict Gaetani, later Pope Boniface VIII., once praised Rome for having *"pedes non plumeos sed plumbeos"*—no winged feet, but leaden heels.

CHAPTER V

GRACE; THE MEANS OF GRACE

GRACE

A clear account of the nature and efficacy of Divine grace is given by a holy Bishop of Paris. "It is," he says: (1) "an aid bestowed on us by God in His mercy, to enable us to do good works and to secure our salvation; (2) an aid against ourselves, or rather against our depraved nature and evil inclinations; (3) an aid to help us to endure with success the sharpest struggle, and to conquer ourselves; (4) an aid against all opposed to our salvation, against all enemies seen and unseen, who strive, by means of bad example and temptation, to make us desist from doing right and fall into evil; (5) an aid enabling us to remain pure amidst the wickedness of this world, and to lead holy lives in the midst of godless men; (6) an aid in our efforts to accomplish good works and to become more holy."—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

THE MEANING OF GRACE

"I had rather *feel* compunction," says the author of the "Imitation," "than know its definition." So might we say of grace—which is measured out to every one of us—that the proper use of it is of vastly more profit than the ability to define it correctly or a profound knowledge of its mysteries. We know little of grace. No human mind has ever fathomed the depths of this mystery. Yet, than this term, grace, there is perhaps none more familiar on the lips of Christians. Accustomed to employ it on innumerable occasions, we understand in a general way what is meant by it. Our perception may not be of the clearest, nor our information the most minute and complete, nor our method of comprehension the most scientific, so to speak. But our knowledge of it, such as it is, is sufficient for all practical purposes.—*John H. Stapleton.*

By the grace of God I am what I am.—I. *Cor.* XV, 10.

The Lord will be at thy side, and will keep thy foot, that thou be not taken.—Prov. III, 26.

He that is good shall draw grace from the Lord.—Prov. XII, 2.

He hath not done in like manner to every nation, and His judgments He hath not made manifest to them.—Ps. CXLVII, 20.

TWO KINDS OF GRACE

And so we speak of two kinds of Divine grace. The one is a transitory succour or support, the other a permanent state of condi-

tion of being established to persevere. The former is a stimulus that quickens and facilitates action, makes it possible to think, to will, to do, according to God; the latter creates a state of ready fitness and vigour, of lasting comfort and pleasure. The one is like a flash of light which illumines the murky darkness—a jolt to the selfish, sluggish, faltering will—a sudden and mighty uplift to achieve what is begun and to complete it. The other is like the constant glow of the noon-day orb, the continuous pressure of a potent force, the exuberance of superadded strength and health and life.

—*John H. Stapleton.*

SANCTIFYING GRACE

Sanctifying or habitual grace is not a gift that comes and goes according to the necessity of the moment, but an abiding virtue which "is poured forth in the heart, by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us." "We will come to him and take our abode in him," says the Holy Spirit. As Christ dwelt visibly in the house of Zacheus, so does God by grace abide invisibly in the soul, creating in us a new manner of being, called supernatural, which is truly a life; and a friendship colouring that life; and an energy capable of producing works in keeping with both that life and that friendship. In other words, this grace flows incessantly, exuberantly upon us if we are properly disposed; and, by its presence in the soul, effects three marvelous results—first, transforming; then justifying and sanctifying; finally, energizing the soul unto a capacity for supernatural merits.—*John H. Stapleton.*

Sanctifying grace is described by St. Thomas as a communication of the Divine nature The first great result of its infusion into the soul is that it becomes closely associated with God.

ACTUAL GRACE

Actual grace is a passing of the Lord in our lives. If through our fault we miss Him, He is gone; and the grace lost will never return. Zacheus understood what it was worth to look upon the countenance of the Lord. If, unlike Him, we do nothing, He will pass unawares, as He did when the mob rose up and thrust Him out of their city of Nazareth and brought Him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong: "But he, passing through the midst of them, went His way." Actual grace is a visitation. If we receive Him not into the house of our souls, as did the publican, to our house salvation will not come.—*John H. Stapleton.*

THE NECESSITY OF GRACE

Here is a stone. It exists, but has not feeling. And feeling it can not give itself, or have, unless the almighty Power which created it interfere to operate a miraculous change. So is it supernatural, so to speak, for a mountain or tree to move about and walk. A fish can not run or fly about in the air above, nor can the beast reason and talk, for such manners of being and of doing are not according to the nature which God gave them, but belong to natures superior to theirs, and are therefore supernatural to them. And so,

because left to himself man disposes only of natural means, he can not without grace attain to the higher life to which he is called, or even strive after it by a becoming service, or even aim at so lofty a goal. No supernatural work of any kind can be accomplished by the unaided forces of nature; nothing "according to God" can be performed except with the assistance of grace.

—John H. Stapleton.

No man can come to Me, unless it be given him by My Father.
—John VI, 66.

Unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.
—Ps. CXXVI, 1.

Oh! how exceedingly necessary is Thy grace for me, O Lord, to begin that which is good, to go forward with it, and to accomplish it. Without it I can do nothing. But I can do all things in Thee, strengthened by Thy grace. O, truly heavenly grace, without which we have no merits of our own, neither are any of the gifts of nature to be valued! No arts, no riches, no beauty nor strength, no wit nor eloquence, are of any worth with Thee, O Lord, without grace. For the gifts of nature are common to the good and bad; but grace, or Divine love, is the proper gift of the elect, and they that are adorned with it are esteemed worthy of eternal life.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

I know that there dwelleth not in me, that is to say, in my flesh, that which is good. For to will is present with me; but to accomplish that which is good I find not.—For the good which I will, I do not; but the evil which I will not, that I do.—Rom. VII, 18-19.

GRACE A GIFT OF GOD

This gift is Divine in a fourfold aspect. First, because it is *from* God, who is the donor, and its source. Then, it is a gift *of* God, for it is a participation, in some manner, of the life and nature of God, a communication of a Divine energy; a virtue not belonging to the human nature with which we are endowed, not essentially required by it as such, infinitely beyond and above any force that can be conceived within or without man in the order of pure nature. Thirdly, this bounty of grace is *for* God, its purpose being for God's glory, to make possible in us a certain shaping and form of life and action in this world, which alone can insure salvation and eternal happiness for us in the next; to assist us in doing and living according to the will of God, after a manner pleasing to Him and worthy of a reward. Finally, *through* God in Christ is it procured for us and bestowed upon us, since to it we have no rightful claim or title, do not and can not deserve it, are insufficient to procure it for ourselves: Christ alone obtained it for us; He, suffering and dying merited for us; and His merits purchased for us this gift, the means of our salvation.

—John H. Stapleton.

What doth it profit God if thou be just? or what dost thou give Him if thy way be unspotted?—Job XXII, 3.

God giveth grace to the humble.—James IV, 6.

It is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will. And do ye all things without murmurings and hesitations.—Phil. II, 13, 14.

By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; for it is the gift of God,—Not of works, that no man may glory.
—Eph. II, 8-9.

INSPIRATIONS

By inspirations are meant all those interior attractions, motions, reproaches and remorses, lights and conceptions, which God excites in us, preceding our hearts with His blessings, through His fatherly care and love, in order to awaken, stimulate, urge and attract us to the practice of every virtue; to heavenly love; to good resolutions; and in a word, to everything that may help us on our way to eternal happiness. This is what the Spouse calls knocking at the door, and speaking to the heart of his spouse; awaking her when she sleeps; calling after her when she is absent; inviting her to gather apples and flowers in his garden; to sing and to cause her sweet voice to sound in his ears.—*St. Francis de Sales.*

THE WILL TO BE SAVED ESSENTIAL

St. Thomas Aquinas was once asked by his sister what she must do in order to be saved. Without a moment's reflection he replied: "You can be saved if you will." She begged him to explain his meaning and he replied: "If you have the will, you can abandon the vanities of the world, you can avoid evil, you can do good. If you have the will, you can be chaste, patient and gentle. If you have the will, you can do God's will in all things. If you have the will, you can increase God's grace within you, and, by means of sanctifying grace, you can be saved."

THE WILL MUST PRODUCE DEEDS

The consent being given, you must diligently procure the effects, and hasten to put the inspiration into execution, which is the height of true virtue; for to have the consent within the heart without producing its effects would be like planting a vine and not intending it should bring forth fruit.—*St. Francis de Sales.*

GRACE OF NO AVAIL UNLESS WE CO-OPERATE

If any one asks why, if God gives every man sufficient grace, so many are lost—we can only reply that Lucifer received far more grace than other blessed spirits, and yet he was cast into hell. Judas undoubtedly received as much grace as the other Apostles, and yet he perished.—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

CO-OPERATION WITH GRACE

"God," says St. Augustine, "has created us without our co-operation, but He will not save us without it." In a word, grace will avail us unto salvation only when we make the necessary efforts on our part to be saved. Divine grace, we should be persuaded, will not

do everything for us, for it is only a *help* to our personal exertions, which are as indispensable as grace itself to our salvation.

To illustrate this let us recall an ancient pagan fable. A teamster's heavily laden wagon was stuck in a deep rut, from which his team could not extricate it. He then began to invoke aloud the aid of Jupiter very earnestly. For hours he kept on crying out with all his might: "O Jupiter, the mightiest of the gods, help me out of this!" But it was all in vain, for the wagon did not move. Hearing his cries to Jupiter a passer-by said to him: "Friend, Jupiter will never help a lazy man like you; first help yourself and put your shoulder to the wheel, and then you may expect Jupiter to help you." The teamster followed the good advice, and in a moment the wagon was out of the rut.—*F. Girardey, C. SS. R.*

While men were asleep his enemy came and oversowed cockle among the wheat, and went his way.—*Matt.* XIII, 25.

The virgins who slept, and whose lamps were not filled before the coming of the Spouse, were excluded from the Eternal Nuptials.
—*(See Matt. XXV.)*

My Son, give Me thy heart; and let thy eyes keep My ways.
—*Prov.* XXII, 26.

God does not carry on His work alone. He does not act directly in the world of nature or of grace, but chooses intermediaries, works through secondary causes. Each day He gives us our daily bread, but it is on the condition that some shall labour in producing, and some in gaining means to purchase it. He is the source, but there are those who act as dispensers of the mysteries of God. It is He who gives the increase to the Church; but some must sow and some must water the crop. He founded the Church, but it was by the labours and preaching of the apostles. Jesus Christ is our Head, our Ruler, our Teacher; but He has bidden us to hear His infallible voice, and render our unquestioning obedience, through His Vicar on earth and the bishops appointed by the Holy Ghost. The treasures of grace are open to us, but they come through the channel of Sacraments administered by men, or through our own exertions in prayer. God demands the aid of men in His work.—*Bishop Bellord.*

What things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that soweth in the flesh, of the flesh also shall reap corruption. But he that soweth in the Spirit, of the Spirit shall reap Life Everlasting.
—*Gal.* VI, 8.

WE MUST FIGHT OUR BATTLES

Had our Lord remained with them, who can say whether they would have shown the boldness, the initiative, the resourcefulness that they manifested during the years of their lives that were spent lacking His presence. It might easily have been that they would have wanted to keep near Him, to depend on His counsel for every action. At any rate, His way of perfecting them was to throw them on their own responsibility and let them win their battles with the

unseen helps of His grace. At the battle of Crecy, an ancient chronicler informs us, King Edward the Third of England took his stand on a hillock with the reserves and sent his son, the Black Prince, to bear the first shock of the French chivalry. For a time the Prince's small force seemed lost in the fierce onslaught, but the King refused to send him aid. "Is he dead, or unhorsed, or so wounded that he cannot help himself?" he asked the envoy. "No, sire," was the reply, "but he is in a hard passage of arms, and sorely needs your help." "Return to those that sent you, Sir Thomas," said the King, "and bid them not to send again so long as my son lives. Let the boy win his spurs; for if God so orders it, I will that the day may be his, and that the honour may be with him and them to whom I have given it in charge."—*Francis P. Duffy.*

Sow for yourselves in justice and reap in the mouth of mercy, break up your fallow ground; but the time to seek the Lord is when He shall come that shall teach you justice.—Os. X, 12.

USE AND ABUSE OF GRACE

When in sickness or misfortune we are reminded of our frail hold on life and impelled to make a better use of what remains; when a friend or acquaintance is suddenly called before his Maker and a warning voice tells to put our own house in order; when a word is dropped in a sermon or uttered in the confessional that sounds like a message from Heaven, all these are actual graces, on the use or abuse of which our very salvation may hang. If St. Paul, or St. Augustine, or St. Ignatius had persistently refused to pay heed to God's call, their lives would have had a very different ending. Indeed, we may say that the great difference between notorious evil-doers and good Christians lies in the good or bad use of their actual grace.—*W. Graham.*

THE USE OF GRACE

Had Martin Luther watched the first grace that came to him, had he heard the knock at the door of his soul and allowed the Lord to enter, had he been faithful to the graces of self-command and self-denial that came to him, he would have been a cedar of Libanus, a mighty reformer, a source of great blessings to the Church. As there was no growth in him, there was decay, and the festerings of his soul spread disease and disorder. His illustrious and saintly contemporary, Charles Borromeo, on the contrary, nurtured every ray of grace that pierced his soul; his was the good soil, and it brought forth fruit a hundredfold. "In the sanctity and justice before the Lord all the days of his life, he grew, suffering the Spirit to lead him whither he would, until, with a soul strong in the Lord Jesus, he became, in the Master's own good time, the much-needed and true reformer of the Church."—*J. W. Sullivan.*

GRATITUDE FOR GRACE

Gratitude for graces received is one of the best means for obtaining new graces.—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

The hope of the unthankful shall melt away as the winter's ice, and shall run off as unprofitable water.—Wis. XVI, 29.

OUR DUTY TO SEEK LIGHT AND TRUTH

God did not give us a mind proof against error and vice; no more did he give us a conscience proof against deception. All these powers, mind and heart and conscience, must be moulded and trained and educated in the right way. If a Christian chooses to remain in wilful ignorance of what it is his bounden duty to know—if he is blindly obstinate against light and truth—if he listens only to the voice of his own individual or national prejudices against plain reason and good sense—if he frequents bad company, reads bad books, studies anti-religious and immoral literature, how can he hope to preserve a true, God-inspired and enlightened conscience?

—W. Graham.

GRACE PURSUING MAN

During the French Revolution there lived at Lyons a man who for many years had discarded religious practices of all kinds. It happened one day that he saw a priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament to a sick person. Wishing to avoid him, the man turned into another street, but great was his astonishment to find that the clergyman with his precious burden was coming the same way. Again the man tried a different road, and again the priest followed. At last the man took refuge in an open doorway, only to see the priest directing his steps towards him, for in that very house lived the sick person. Deeply moved by this evident invitation of Divine grace, he exclaimed: "See how God's mercy is pursuing me! I shall resist no longer. From this very hour I believe as firmly as of old."—*Frederick Reuter.*

You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you; and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit.

—John XV, 16.

Behold, I stand at the gate and knock. If any man shall hear My voice, and open to Me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.—Apoc. III, 20.

Knowest thou not that the benignity of God leadeth thee to penance?—Rom. II, 4.

This is the work of God that you believe in Him whom He had sent.—John VI, 29.

THE MEANS GOD USES

To us, it does not belong to judge what are the most proper means to be employed, whether natural or miraculous. To God they are both equally easy, and the Christian religion assures us that sometimes He uses one and sometimes the other—sometimes He procures the sanctity and perfection of His servants (and we may add their temporal health, happiness, and well-being) by ordinary and natural means, and sometimes He employs miraculous and

extraordinary means for this purpose, as He in His wisdom judges proper. But it cannot be denied that it is most becoming the Divine goodness and wisdom to use means for attaining His views which are most proper and conducive thereto.—*Bishop Hay.*

THE GRACE OF CONVERSION

If God is all-powerful over the mind and heart, why does He not move all the Buddhists and Hindus to become Catholics? Why does He require all this amount of laborious enterprise such as is represented by the work of our foreign missions? Surely to do so would be a far more useful miracle than the turning of water into wine or the raising up of the dead to life! The answer is that Christ could and did use the direct way of converting souls as well as the indirect way. And even to-day God does move souls to Himself secretly rather than openly. It was the opinion of the late Cardinal Vaughan that the numerous conversions in England could not be accounted for by preaching, but must rather be attributed to grace acting directly in answer to prayer.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

WHAT GOD OFFERS US

Suppose some powerful prince were to approach a poor man and address him in this way: "Now, my poor man, I will make you an offer. If you will do a little easy work for me, and just behave yourself decently for one short day of twelve hours, I will make you rich and prosperous for fifty years. Nay, I will make you a still better offer. If you will be honest and industrious and work at the simple task I will give you to do *during the space of one single hour,* I will give you everything you desire for *fifty years,* and I will take you into my own house, and you will be treated as my son, and I will have my servants to wait on you, and my carriages at your service." What would you say? Well, you would be inclined, firstly, to doubt the sincerity of the offer. You would ask: "Do I understand you aright? Am I to have fifty long years of such delight in exchange for one short hour of easy work?" And again the prince would assure you that it is so. Well, you would, of course, accept such terms with the greatest gratitude and delight. Yet, this is nothing compared to what God offers us.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

GRACE CONVEYED THROUGH KIND WORDS

In the French revolution, when so many priests were put to death, there was a wicked woman who would shamefully insult the priests on their way to be guillotined. One day when she was thus insulting a holy priest about to be executed, the priest turned to her, saying: "Madam, please pray for me." This request so struck her that she stopped insulting him, burst into tears and went home greatly moved. She could not rid herself of the thought of praying for the priest, and she, who had led an awful life and had not said a prayer for many years, began to pray, and was soon so thoroughly converted that, for the remainder of her life, she gave great edification.—*Ferreol Girardey, C.SS.R.*

SUFFICIENT GRACE

It is a doctrine of Catholic faith that as long as the soul is in its state of probation, there is grace awaiting it sufficient for salvation.

Divide a moment, as men measure time,
Into its million-million-millionth part,

and even in that last infinitesimal portion of life Divine strength is given to the soul for all its needs. It is given, moreover, with all the fulness and willingness of every other grace, whether at the beginning or at any moment during life. Nay, were it possible, it would be given with still greater willingness, for in that moment lies hell's last chance; and we can not but think that Infinite Goodness would do everything compatible with its own very existence to thwart that chance. The Jansenist prayed: "From all sufficient grace, good Lord deliver us;" insinuating that the merely sufficient grace was insufficient. If the grace were not powerful enough to enable the sinner to overcome all his sins, then it were not sufficient; and if it were powerful enough to enable him to overcome all his sins, then no more were needed.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

My grace is sufficient for thee: for power is made perfect in infirmity. Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.—For when I am weak, then am I powerful.—II. *Cor.* XII, 9, *sq.*

WE CAN DO GOOD ONLY WITH THE HELP OF GOD

Those who believe themselves the authors of the good they have done, or who flatter themselves with having the least share in the world in it, or take complacency in such thoughts, lose more than they gain, even when the works on which they are engaged are good and holy.—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

Without Me you can do nothing.—John XV, 5.

WITHOUT GRACE WE CANNOT AVOID SIN

So has the race of men been depraved, that, even when they have done violence to their concupiscence, and subjected it to the Divine will, yet they cannot avoid sin without God's assistance, by which we are protected from evil and directed to good. Therefore we must beseech God to perfect in us what He has begun; to repress the turbulent motions of desire; to render our appetites subject to reason; to make us, in fine, entirely conformable to His will. We also pray that the whole world may receive the knowledge of God's will (1 Tim. ii, 4); that "the mystery of God, hidden from ages and generations" (Col. i, 26, *sq.;* Eph. iii, 4, *sq.*), may be made known and manifest to all.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

WITHOUT GRACE WE CANNOT LOVE OR SERVE GOD

And if we accomplish some things, they are trivial, and of little or no moment towards the attainment of heavenly bliss; but never shall we be able, unless assisted by Divine grace, to love and serve God as we ought, which is something greater and more exalted than

in our present prostrate condition we can accomplish by human strength.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

Who distinguisheth thee? Or what hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received: why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?—I *Cor.* IV, 7.

PRAYER

PRAYER

It is a great and blessed privilege that we can pray to God, though we seldom stop to think of this, and perhaps for this very reason fail to make use of the privilege as we ought. It is hard for the poor and lowly ones of this world to gain favours from the wealthy and the great; hard even to have access to them. For the most part they can only present their petitions through others, and if they themselves venture to present them, they run the risk of being turned away and even treated with contempt. But the lowliest of the low can at any moment of the day or night gain admittance to the audience chamber of the King of Kings, and is sure to be made welcome. "Come to Me," are His words of standing invitation, "all ye who labour and are heavy-laden and I will refresh you."

But prayer is more than a privilege, it is a duty; more even than a duty: it is a necessity. We must ask if we would receive, seek if we would find, knock if we would have the door of Heaven opened to us. It is of faith that no one who has come to the use of reason can be saved without prayer. If you clip the wings off a bird it can not fly, it can not soar aloft into its own element and be happy in the companionship of its mates. So the soul of man can never mount upward without prayer, can never join the blessed company of the angels and the Saints in the happy home above. What the air we breathe is to the life of the body, that prayer is to the life of the soul. And as we know a man is dead when he ceases to breathe the vital air, so we know that the soul of the man who lifts not his voice in prayer is dead within him.—*Bishop A. MacDonald.*

St. Thomas teaches us that prayer is preëminent among the acts of the virtue of religion. "It belongs properly to the virtue of religion to give due reverence and honour to God, and hence all those things by which such reverence is shown to God come under religion. By prayer, however, a man shows reverence to God inasmuch as he submits himself to Him, and by praying acknowledges that he views God as the Author of all his good."

—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

Amen, amen, I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in My Name, He will give it to you.—Hitherto you have not asked anything in My Name: ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.
—*John* XVI, 23-24.

You shall call upon Me, and you shall go: and you shall pray to Me, and I will hear you.—You shall seek Me, and shall find Me, when you shall seek Me with all your heart.—Jer. XXIX, 12-13.

If any of you want wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men abundantly, and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.—For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, which is moved and carried about by the wind.—Therefore let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.—James I, 5-7.

You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss: that you may consume it on your concupiscences.—James IV, 3.

O God, my God, to Thee do I watch at break of day. For Thee my soul hath thirsted; for Thee my flesh, O how many ways!
—Ps. LXII, 1-2.

Let us go with confidence to the Throne of Grace: that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in seasonable aid.—Heb. IV, 16.

When thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret: and thy Father, Who seeth in secret, will repay thee.—Matt. VI, 6.

Pray one for another, that you may be saved. For the continual prayer of a just man availeth much.—James V, 16.

RELIGION IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT PRAYER

Despite his thorough familiarity with Catholic teaching, Cardinal Newman confessed that before his conversion he knew nothing whatever of the inner life of Catholics. We are frequently astonished on conversing with honest Protestants at their utter incapacity to sense the meaning of Catholic things; Catholic spirituality speaks to them in a language as foreign as that of the dead tribes of the Aztecs. A similar condition is soon born in the mind and soul of him who without prayer continues for a while outwardly to practice a form of religion. There is no substance to such a religion, for it is empty of its reality which is prayer. And it is bound in the long run to mean nothing to him more than a tissue of parables, proverbs and enigmas, in which he comes to see no sense, reason or utility, into whose life he does not enter, and cannot because he no longer comprehends.—*John H. Stapleton.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

The prayer itself is so touchingly clear and simple that it carries its message to every heart, so much so, indeed, that it seems almost profane to analyze or dissect it. But the more we examine even the simplest of God's works the more admirable they seem. Reflection brings to light most complex mysteries in apparently the simplest and most commonplace objects in Nature—*e. g.,* a drop of water, a sunbeam, the song of birds, or scent of flowers. We see herein

the mind of God at work, all things, "in number, weight and measure," "reaching from end to end mightily, and disposing all things sweetly." So it is with the Lord's Prayer. It is an epitome of God's relations and dealings with His creatures. It sums up, in a measure, theology, doctrinal and moral. It is a sort of spiritual cell which involves, and from which by reflection we can evolve, the whole body of Christ's teaching. Hence, its constant use by the Church in her liturgy, in the Mass, the Divine office, the Sacraments and sacramentals, as well as her binding all her children to learn it by heart. To make it part of our daily tribute of worship, in morning and evening prayers, is deemed by all a matter of conscience—a duty we strictly owe to almighty God.

—*William Graham.*

PRAYER IN THE NAME OF JESUS

The prayer, "through our Lord Jesus Christ," is not infallible, I grant, in the sense of obtaining *anything* we ask for. It will not necessarily obtain for us wealth, pleasure, freedom from sickness or from spiritual trials. For notice that the text puts a restriction on the word "*anything,*" viz., "in My Name," and "that your joy may be full." Our prayer is addressed to a Father who is all-wise, as well as all-loving, and such a Father will grant *anything* to His dearly loved child, but only if it is for that child's real good. True love is so unselfish as to refuse when harm will follow. There is great selfishness in a love which cannot refuse when it is better to do so. Real love for us has our Heavenly Father. He wishes for us the "fulness of joy" rather than immediate and passing gratification. St. Gregory says: "You have not asked in the name of the Saviour," because you have not known how to ask for eternal salvation. Hence Paul was not heard, for if he had been freed from his temptation "it would not have been conducive to his salvation" (Cf. II. Cor. xii).

Prayer in the name of Jesus infallibly gains for us what is really best for us. When we come to our Father's home we shall then appreciate how powerful for our real and lasting good have been the prayers offered in Jesus' name; from how many evils, which to us in our blindness seemed advantages, we have thereby been saved; that many of the seeming hardships and miseries of life have been permitted or sent by a watchful Providence as a reward of such prayer; and that many things, which went nigh to destroying our faith in prayer, have been amongst the great graces of our lives, in that, by making this world bitter to us, they saved us from its many dangers and deceptions. We must be full of faith in His love. He may answer us "in proverbs," but the time will surely come when He will no more speak to us in proverbs, "but will show us plainly of the Father."—*B. Hayes, O. S. B.*

RESPONSE TO PRAYER

A little boy in a crowd comes and "prays" me to lift him up, in order that he may see a passing procession. Gravity holds him down. But I can overcome gravity; and *in answer to the child's prayer,* I can, by a simple act of the will, extend my arms about the child and exert muscular strength enough to raise him above the

heads of the people so that he may see. Now, when God, in His turn, answers prayers, He does but do, in a higher and sublimer and in a Divine way, very much what He has enabled me to do in a smaller and mere human way.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

GOD EVER READY TO RECEIVE OUR PRAYER

One of the best proofs of God's goodness and love is His readiness to receive our prayers and supplications. If we wish to unburden ourselves about our difficulties or our sorrows to an earthly monarch we are at once confronted by endless obstacles. We have to wait till it suits his convenience to give us an audience; we often have to travel far, and to spend much time, and to take much trouble, before we are ushered into his presence, and even then, perhaps, he scarcely attends to our words, but hastens off to engage himself in more congenial occupation. God, on the contrary, is ever ready to harken to our prayers at all hours of the day and night, and will open His ears to our petitions, which such infinite tenderness and patience that we might almost imagine that there were no other creature in existence to solicit His attention.

He not only suffers us to address Him with the greatest familiarity, but He encourages and even commands us to do so, and is never better pleased than when we are asking Him for graces and blessings. Though He is infinitely great and exalted and we are so poor and unworthy, He neither despises nor repulses us, but treats us as a loving father treats his own children.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

Louis XVI, King of France, had a special affection for one of his courtiers. Whatever this man asked was sure to be granted. One day he went as usual to ask a favour from the king. But it happened that the king was angry at this time, and said to him in a passion: "You are always asking me for something. Are you ever going to stop?" At these words the man hung down his head, and went away disappointed. Sometimes our request may be refused by people in this world, even by those who love us, but God will never be angry with us, nor refuse us when we pray to Him; on the contrary, He is angry with us when we neglect to call upon Him in our needs.

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER WITHOUT INTERFERING WITH HIS ESTABLISHED ORDER OF THINGS

Is God less able than man to work His will in His own creation? Man may flood the desert, divide the course of a river, clear a forest and drain a marsh; or he may so confine and entomb a force within the iron boiler of a steam engine as to make it fly through space along its railway track at fifty or sixty miles an hour. Is there any interference with nature here? Is there any dislocation of the harmony of things? Evidently not. Man merely plays upon the forces around him, as a harper plays upon his harp strings. Man can not, of course, annihilate nor can he create so much as a grain of sand; nor can he create or absolutely destroy the simplest force; but what he can do is to acquaint himself with the

characteristics of existing forces, to direct them, to utilize them, to turn them to account, and to employ them for various purposes.

Now, what God does in answer to prayer need no more interfere with the established order of the universe than what man himself does. There need be no more "meddling" and "upsetting" when God interferes to bring about some advantage, or to ward off a calamity from a person, a city, or a nation that has invoked His aid, than when I interfere by my free will.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

EFFICACY OF PRAYER

The scriptural history of the great prophet Elias is rich in instances of the efficacy of prayer to move the heart of God, and to bring down His graces and blessings. Even St. James in his Epistle, can cite no better example to move us to confidence and trust. He observes that, "Elias was a man, passable like us, and with prayer he prayed that it might not rain upon the earth, and it rained not for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit" (v, 16-18). But, marvelous as this was, he brought about still more wonderful results by the same simple means. He raised the dead body of the son of the poor widow of Sarepta to life; he multiplied the pot of meal and the little cruse of oil, which was all she had in her house, so that they sufficed for her sustenance during the three years of scarcity; and worked many other wonders through the power of his prayers.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

THE EFFECT OF PRAYER

Now, devotion is that true spiritual sugar which corrects the bitterness of mortification by the sweetness of its consolations; it removes discontent from the poor; solicitude from the rich; sadness from the oppressed; insolence from the exalted; melancholy from the solitary, and dissipation from him that is in company. It serves as well for fire in winter as for dew in summer. It knows as well how to use abundance as how to suffer want, and how to render honour and contempt equally profitable. In a word, it entertains pleasure and pain with equanimity, and replenishes the soul with an admirable sweetness.—*St. Francis de Sales.*

Prayer, as St. John Chrysostom says, "is a powerful means of warding off the attacks of the devil, and affords us protection against all dangers." "It preserves moderation, represses anger, checks pride and envy, quiets feelings of revenge, draws down the Holy Ghost upon the soul and raises man to heaven" (St. Ephrem.). "Whosoever arms himself with prayer, will not fall into sin, but, detaching himself from earth, will rise to Heaven" (St. John Chrys.).

PRAYER NECESSARY

After Baptism continual prayer is necessary to man in order that he should reach Heaven; for, though by Baptism our sins are remitted there still remains concupiscence, to assail us from within, as well as the world and the devil to assail us from without. He further explains this when he observes that prayer is necessary not

in order that God may know our necessities, but in order that we may be compelled to acknowledge Him as the one and only supreme source of all our graces.—*St. Thomas Aquinas.*

All the adults who are in Heaven are there because they prayed; had they not prayed, they would never have reached Heaven. All who are in hell are there because they neglected prayer; had they prayed, they would not be in hell, but in Heaven. Two criminals died, one on each side of Jesus; one of them prayed and was saved; the other did not pray, and was lost.—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

Since it is impossible without natural warmth that the human body thrives, thus the life of the soul is impossible without the warmth of prayer. It bestows upon the soul the strength to produce meritorious work.—*St. Thomas of Villanova.*

And, if the angels and our first parents could not maintain themselves in innocence, though they were created without sin and without concupiscence, how far more impossible must it be for us to persevere without prayer, who are born in original sin, and with so many and such strong natural inclinations to evil.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

GRATITUDE TO GOD

We should at least spend as much time in thanking God for favours received as we have spent in asking them.

—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

HUMBLE PRAYER

Thou oughtest to seek the grace of devotion earnestly, to ask it fervently, to wait for it patiently and confidently, to receive it thankfully, to keep it humbly, to work with it diligently, and to commit to God the time and manner of this heavenly visitation, until it shall please Him to come unto thee. Thou oughtest chiefly to humble thyself when thou feelest inwardly little or no devotion: and yet not to be too much dejected, nor to grieve inordinately. God often giveth in one short moment what He hath a long time denied. He giveth sometimes in the end, that which in the beginning of prayer He deferred to grant.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

The best dispositions which we can bring to meditation and prayer are humility, a conviction of our own nothingness, a mortification of our passions and of the natural inclinations that lead us to evil, purity of intention, the presence of God, an entire conformity to His will, and frequent aspirations towards the Divine goodness.

—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYER

For sixteen years St. Monica prayed fervently and performed penances for the conversion of her son Augustine; and by her earnest perseverance she not only obtained his conversion, but she herself became thereby a great Saint, a wonderful favour which she had not thought of praying for. "Let us not cease praying," says St.

Augustine, "for God only defers, but does not refuse to hear us."—*Ferreol Girardey, C. SS. R.*

PRAYER AND CHARITY

The prayer most likely to be heard by God is the prayer that is backed up by works of charity.—*St. Leo the Great.*

PRAYER IN THOUGHT RATHER THAN IN WORDS

Our conversation with God should be in thought rather than in many words. A few words on part of the Publican proved his salvation. A single petition saved the penitent thief. Martha said to our Lord only a few words: "Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick," and her prayer was heard.—*St. Jerome.*

ORDER OF PRAYER

The proper order is first to render thanks to God, then to confess our sinfulness, and repent of it, then to submit our petition.

—*St. Jerome.*

PRAY FOR GOD'S ASSISTANCE

Let us imagine a person suspended over a great precipice by a cord held by another. Surely he would constantly cry out to the person who supports him: Hold fast, hold fast; for God's sake, do not let go! We are all in danger of falling into the abyss of all crime, if God does not support us. Hence we should constantly beseech him to keep His hands over us, and to succour us in all dangers.—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

ATTENTION IN PRAYER

There is a threefold species of attention which may find place in vocal prayer, according to our Angelic Doctor. "One by which a man attends to the words which he recites, and is careful to make no mistake in them. Another by which he attends to the meaning of the words, and a third by which he attends to the end of all prayer—namely, God Himself—and to the object for which he is praying. And this species of attention is the most necessary of all." —*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

DISTRACTIONS IN PRAYER

St. Bridget suffered much in this way, and our Lady once appeared to her and said: "The devil is wont to torment anyone who prays, and to send him as many distractions as he can. But be not troubled on that account, my daughter, for though you may suffer from distractions, you can always have an earnest desire to pray well, and then your prayer will be pleasing to my Son."

A MEANS AGAINST DISTRACTION

St. Francis found a sure means of keeping his mind during prayer free from all external pre-occupation. Whenever he entered into a church he said: "Worldly and frivolous thoughts, stay you at the door till I return again." Then he prayed as though he were alone on the earth; his devotion was so great that he seemed not to know what distraction was.

THE SACRAMENTS

THE SACRAMENTS AND THEIR EFFECT

The doctrine of the Real Presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and the continual enforcement of it in all the ceremonies and surroundings of worship, does more than anything else to fix and crystallize into solid form the Catholic perception of the supernatural. The Sacraments have the same effect; they are not to us merely comforting forms, or dictates of piety and propriety, but they are actual remissions of sin, a conveyance of definite powers. So real is their effect on the soul that it overflows upon the body, changing the aspect of the countenance; or, as with Extreme Unction, reducing the fevered temperature of the sick.—*Bishop Bellord.*

BAPTISM

BAPTISM

With regard to the definition, although many may be adduced from sacred writers, yet that which may be understood from the words of Our Lord, in John and the Epistle to the Ephesians, appears more appropriate and convenient; for since Our Saviour says: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John ii, 5); and the Apostle, when speaking of the Church: "Cleansing it by the laver of water in the Word of life" (Eph. V, 26); it hence follows that Baptism may be accurately and appositely defined to be, "The Sacrament of regeneration by water in the Word;" for by nature we are born from Adam children of wrath, but by Baptism we are regenerated in Christ children of mercy, for "He gave power to men to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in His Name, who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John I, 12).—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.—John III, 5.

Now you are no more strangers and foreigners: but you are fellow-citizens with the Saints, and the domestics of God:—Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner-stone.—Eph. II, 19-20.

Know you not that all we, who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in His Death?—For we are buried together with Him by Baptism into death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life.—For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His Death, we shall be also in the likeness of His Resurrection.—Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, to the end that we may serve sin no longer.—Rom. VI, 3-6.

Peter said to them: Do penance, and be baptized every one of you

in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins: and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.—Acts II, 38.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.—Mark XVI, 16.

WHEN THE WILL STANDS FOR THE DEED

As there are cases where non-Baptism is accounted Baptism, so, in similar cases, those who are external to the Church are accounted as members of the Church. The will stands for the deed. Those who are desirous of obeying God's commands have already obeyed them. Even though they be ignorant of the precise thing which God wills, and do not consciously desire to do that particular thing, yet they have an implicit desire of it. The love of God, devout service of Him, the wish to know His will, and the readiness to do it whatever it be, this contains the desire to receive Baptism or to enter the Catholic Church, and is equivalent to actually doing so. Thus there are some, many we may hope, who are outside the visible communion of the Catholic Church, and yet are invisibly, even unconsciously, included in it. They do not know of the duty of outward conformity, they are not classed as Catholics, they do not belong to the Body of the Church; but they are said to belong to the Soul of the Church because of their invisible union with her through implicit desire of actual union.—*Bishop Bellord.*

BAPTISM THE MOST NECESSARY OF THE SACRAMENTS

Perhaps, with the exception of Holy Orders, the administration of no Sacrament is so elaborate as that of Baptism. The Church, no doubt, wishes thereby to impress the recipient and the attendants with the importance of this rite. It is the first and most necessary of the Sacraments, and therefore termed, sometimes, the "gate of all the Sacraments." It is the incorporation into the mystical body of Christ, the holy Catholic Church, and entitles us to participate in all the privileges of a Christian here on earth, and to look forward to the everlasting bliss of the Church triumphant in Heaven.

—*W. Lieber.*

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN

Christian Baptism, as instituted by Christ, differs greatly from the rite administered by St. John the Baptist, which was intended only to be a form of penance. The words used by St. John were not the same as those used by Our Lord, and his Baptism was not necessary to salvation, nor did infants receive it, for they do not need penance. St. John's Baptism could not remove either original or actual sin, and was not a Sacrament. It could be received several times, whereas the Baptism of Christ can be received but once.

—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

SPONSORS

We easily understand to what sort of persons the administration of this holy guardianship should not be intrusted; namely, to those who are either unwilling to discharge it faithfully, or unable to do so assiduously and accurately. Wherefore, besides the natural parents, who, to mark more strongly how much this spiritual bringing up differs from the carnal, are not permitted to undertake that charge,

heretics, particularly Jews and infidels, are altogether to be forbidden this office, their thoughts and cares being ever occupied in obscuring by falsehoods the truth of the Faith, and subverting all Christian piety.

—Catechism of the Council of Trent.

THE DUTIES OF SPONSORS

So negligently is this office treated in the Church, that its bare name alone is left; but of the sanctity contained therein men seem not even to have the least idea. Let all sponsors, then, at all times recollect that they are bound principally by this law to exercise a constant vigilance over their spiritual children, and take particular care that in those things which regard the formation of a Christian life they approve themselves through life such as their sponsors promised they should be by the solemn ceremony. On this subject let us hear what St. Denis writes of speaking the language of the sponsor: "I promise by my assiduous exhortations to induce the child, when he shall arrive at a knowledge of religion, to renounce everything opposed to, and to profess and perform the sacred promises which he makes." St. Augustine also: "I most especially admonish you;" says he, "men and women who have become sponsors, to know that you stood sureties before God for those whom you have been seen to receive at the sacred font." And, indeed, it eminently becomes him who has undertaken any office, to be indefatigable in the diligent discharge of its duties; and he who professed to be the teacher and guardian of another, should on no account suffer him to be deserted whom he once received under his trust and guardianship, so long as he shall understand him to have occasion for his care and protection. Speaking of this same office of sponsors, St. Augustine sums up, in a few words, the lessons of instruction which ought to be impressed by them on their spiritual children; for he says: "They ought to admonish them to observe chastity, love justice, cherish charity; and above all, let them teach them the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments also, and what are the first rudiments of the Christian religion."

—Catechism of the Council of Trent.

THE CRIME OF WITHHOLDING BAPTISM FROM CHILDREN

To kill an innocent child even before it is born, is a dastardly murder. To kill a child before it is baptized and send it into the next world without the Sacrament of Baptism, is a heinous crime for which God will deal out terrible but just punishment.

—P. Hehel, S. J.

GOD'S CHILD

St. Louis, King of France, was a great Saint. Although the ruler of a mighty nation he was not proud, because he remembered that all worldly greatness must soon pass away, and he thought only of that eternal kingdom which God has promised to give to those who serve Him on earth. He taught his children to do the same. As each of them was brought home from the church on the day of his Baptism, he would take him into his arms with great joy, and embrace him tenderly, saying: "Dear little one, until now you were only *my* child, but to-day, by Baptism, God has made you *His* child. May His holy Name be blessed for ever!"

CONFIRMATION

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation is placed second on the list of the Sacraments, for two reasons: The first is, that in the early Church it was conferred immediately after Baptism. The second is, that Confirmation is the complement of Baptism. However, we must not think it therefore one and the same Sacrament as the first, nor is it a mere rite or public profession of faith in the presence of the Bishop, as it is understood by our Anglican brethren, but a true distinct Sacrament. In a remarkable passage (Praescr. 40), Tertullian places this "sealing of the soldiers on the forehead" between Baptism and the Eucharist, plainly indicating thereby that Confirmation is a "true and proper Sacrament" according to the Tridentine doctrine. The same difference that exists in the natural life between birth and growth, exists also in the supernatural, between Baptism, which gives spiritual life, and Confirmation, which strengthens it.

—*W. Lieber.*

When the Apostles, who were in Jerusalem, had heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John.—Who when they were come, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost.—For He was not yet come upon any of them: but they were only baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. —Then they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost.—Acts VIII, 14-17.

When Paul had imposed his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them.—Acts XIX, 6.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST THE TOUCHSTONE OF FAITH

And even now, as of yore, the doctrine of the Blessed Eucharist is the touchstone of Divine faith. It is the crucible in which the sterling gold of Divine faith is separated from the alloy of human opinion. It creates that immense gulf between the true Church and the many false ones; between the Church of the present Christ and the churches of the absent Christ; between the living Church, living by the breath of its Founder, living by His glorious presence, and the dead churches, dead because they have separated themselves from the living truth; dead because they have not upon their altars the sacramental Presence, the source of life and light. The church that has not Christ is a dead church indeed; Christ is the soul, the life, the vital principle, of the Church. Yea, they are churches without Christ, the churches of those who have rejected the blessed Eucharist, they are churches without life and light, churches without the living faith, for they have not stood the test of faith, like those unfortunate, forgotten disciples. How can they have words of life, since they have rejected Him who alone has words of life?

—*Charles Bruehl.*

THE REAL PRESENCE

Perspicuous and clear are the words of our Saviour, which demonstrate the real presence of His body in the Sacrament; for when He says: "This is My body, this is My blood," no one, provided he be of sane mind, can be at a loss to know what we are to understand, particularly as He speaks of His human nature, of the real existence of which in Christ the Catholic Faith permits no one to doubt. As Hilary, a man of eminent holiness and learning, has admirably written, there is no room to doubt the reality of the flesh and blood of Christ, since, according to the declaration of our Lord, and our faith, His "flesh is meat indeed."

Another passage also is to be expounded by pastors, from which it is clearly to be learnt that in the Eucharist are contained the true Body and Blood of the Lord. For the Apostle having recorded the consecration of bread and wine by the Lord and His administration of the sacred mysteries to His Apostles, subjoins: "But let a man prove himself, and so eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Body of the Lord" (I. Cor. xi, 28, *sq.*). If, as heretics repeatedly assert, there were nothing else to be venerated in the Sacrament but a memorial and sign of the passion of Christ, what occasion was there to exhort the faithful, in language so energetic, to "prove" themselves? For by that heavy denunciation contained in the word "judgment," the Apostle declared that some grievous enormity is perpetrated by him who, unworthily receiving the Body of the Lord, concealed beneath the Eucharistic veil, distinguishes it not from other kind of food. This the Apostle also more fully developed in a preceding passage of the same epistle, in these words: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ? and the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord?" (1 Cor. x, 16); words which indeed demonstrate the real substance of the Body and Blood of Christ (in the holy Eucharist).

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

Amen, amen, I say unto you: He that believeth in Me, hath Everlasting Life.—I am the Bread of Life.—Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead.—This is the Bread which cometh down from Heaven; that if any man eat of It, he may not die.—I am the Living Bread, which came down from Heaven.—If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever: and the Bread that I will give, is My Flesh for the life of the world.—The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying: How can this man give us His Flesh to eat?

—*John* VI, 47-53.

Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say unto you: Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you.—He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath Everlasting Life: and I will raise him up in the last day.—For My Flesh is meat indeed: and My Blood is drink indeed:—He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me, and I in him.—As the Living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father:

so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me.—This is the Bread that came down from Heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this Bread shall live forever.
—*John* VI, 54-60.

The Chalice of Benediction which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ?—I. *Cor.* X, 16.

Ah! words of the olden Thursday,
Still holding creative sway!
Ye have brought us the Friday's Victim
And Priest in His own sweet way.
'Neath veils, with His glorified body,
Himself He offers this day.

—*Father Ryan.*

THE REAL PRESENCE THE ESSENCE OF CATHOLIC WORSHIP

Everything in the worship of the Church has reference to the one thing. The real presence of Jesus Christ is the source of all, and gives significance to all in the sacred liturgy. High Mass and Benediction, the vestments, and lights, and incense, the altars, the intricate carvings, the painted legends of the windows, the pictures on the walls, the empowering solemnities of midnight Mass, of the services of Holy Week, of the processions of Corpus Christi—what do they all mean? This alone, that God approaches to us as to no others, that He really descends upon our altars and abides among men. Without this great central doctrine all the pomp of religious ceremonies would be meaningless, mere empty form, histrionic show, ministering only to curiosity and vanity. We have often heard bitter criticism and ridicule of the imposing functions of the Catholic Church. They are censured as being an appeal to the lower faculties of unspiritual men, an unworthy attempt to overawe men through their material senses, and to create an artificial reverence. There would not be a word too much or too strong in these censures if our religion was as those others which do not enjoy the Real Presence. Catholics would be the first to despise the folly of gorgeous vestments, and thrilling music, and solemn actions, if they were employed only because they look nice and have a good effect. We may sometimes read of splendid functions in non-Catholic churches, imitations of our solemn benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, with its outward accompaniments of lights and flowers, and banners, and vestments. We wonder what it was all about; we read on, and perhaps we find that the grand procession of ministers approached the communion table, incensed it, and retired. The mere outward husk of Catholicism!
—*Bishop Bellord.*

GOD THE FATHER AND GOD THE HOLY GHOST ALSO TRULY PRESENT IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

As every well instructed Catholic knows, by virtue of the words of the consecration the bread and wine are changed into the sacred Body and Blood of Christ. Now comes the question: Is the human

soul of Jesus Christ also present? Certainly it is, but not in virtue of the consecrating words, which do not even refer to it; but because since the Resurrection, Body and Soul are inseparable. In short, where the Sacred Body is, the Soul of Jesus Christ must also be. This is what theologians express by the word "concomitance." And what shall we say about the Divinity of Christ? That is also present, and for the same reason; viz., because where the Body, and, in fact, the entire humanity of Jesus Christ is present there also must be present the Divinity. No power can separate them. Then are the Eternal Father, and the Holy Ghost also truly present in the Blessed Sacrament? In the light of the principles already laid down the answer must be in the affirmative.

Observe: There are not three Divine Essences, but only one. Hence it must follow, that wherever that one Divine Essence is, there must be all three Persons. The nature of God can not be parcelled out among three. No such division is so much as possible. But since there is only one nature or essence, wherever that nature is there also must be equally present each of the Divine Persons. But, in the Blessed Sacrament there is most certainly the Divine substance or nature, then there must also be, not in virtue of the words of consecration, but by concomitance, not only God the Son, but also God the Father and the Holy Ghost.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

If we speak always of the presence of Jesus Christ, of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and but seldom mention, in this connection, the other members of the Trinity, it is only because the sacred Body and Blood of Jesus Christ alone are present *by virtue of the words of institution*, and the sacred Body and the sacred Blood were assumed by the Sacred Person alone, and not by the Holy Ghost.

The Divine Persons are indivisible, inseparable, and so united in one nature, that where one is the rest must be. Though indivisible, they are distinct, because the Persons are different, though the nature is the same. That is to say: No Divine Person can separate His personality from His nature. Hence, where one Person is, there also must be the Divine nature. But the one nature is, and must ever be, common to the three Persons; consequently the other two Persons must be equi-present there likewise.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

BELIEF IN THE REAL PRESENCE

One day as Mass was being celebrated in the magnificent chapel of St. Louis, King of France, there was seen at the elevation not the Sacred Host, but a wonderfully beautiful Infant. The persons present asked the priest to continue to elevate our Lord until they could call the holy king to come and witness the prodigy. They called the king, who was near by, but he would not go to see the wonder, saying: "Let those go to see this wonder who do not believe firmly in the Real Presence; as for me, I have never had, thank God, any doubt on this point." Let us strive to have as firm a faith as that saintly king, especially when we assist at holy Mass and receive Holy Communion.—*Ferreol Girardey, C.SS.R.*

HE PRACTICED WHAT HE PREACHED

It is related of Bishop Mermilled that, at the celebration of the Forty Hours' devotion in a certain church, he delivered in the evening a most eloquent and impressive sermon on the Holy Eucharist. After the sermon the Bishop stayed in the sacristy until he thought that all the people had left the church, and, as was his custom, he then went and knelt on the step of the altar and remained there in silent prayer for some time. At the conclusion of his prayer he arose and was about to depart, when to his surprise he found he was not alone in the church, for he heard steps. Upon looking in the direction where the steps came from, he observed a woman who approached him and said: "I am a Protestant, and curiosity brought me to this church this evening. I heard your sermon and found it so convincing that I resolved that what you said must be the truth, if your actions in private bear out what you preach in public. When all the other people left I stayed in church, thinking that perhaps I might have an opportunity to satisfy myself on this point. You could not see me when you came out, and I know that you thought that there was no one about but yourself. I have seen with my own eyes that you really believe what you preach, and now I intend to become a Catholic."

THE GRACE OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Greater is the grace of the Holy Eucharist than the grace of the Incarnation. In the Incarnation the Lord bestowed Divinity only on His soul and His sacred manhood, in the Holy Eucharist He bestowed His Divinity upon all men.—*St. Theresa.*

A MIRACLE TO PROVE THE REAL PRESENCE

St. Anthony of Padua, the great miracle worker of the thirteenth century, was preaching at Toulouse, where many heretics denied the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. One of them challenged him to perform a miracle to prove the Real Presence. St. Anthony asked him: "What miracle do you ask for?" He replied: "I will believe if my mule falls on its knees in presence of what you call the Blessed Sacrament." St. Anthony, inspired by God and trusting in Him, accepted the challenge. At the appointed time he went in solemn procession carrying the Blessed Sacrament, followed by an immense number of people, to the public square in front of the church. The heretic with his mule was there, waiting for him. St. Anthony then spoke thus aloud to the mule: "Creature of God, in the name of thy Creator, whom I hold in my hands, I command thee to kneel down and adore Him." In the meantime, the heretic was tempting the hungry mule to eat a bundle of hay. But the mule, paying no attention to the hay, at once fell on its knees and remained there, until St. Anthony told it to get up and eat. The heretic, its owner, was the first to cry out: "I believe in the Real Presence; I am now a Catholic." Many heretics present were also converted.

Charlemagne wished to make the Saxons Christians, and gave them missionaries to instruct them, but they revolted and expelled the missionaries. Charlemagne then invaded their country. The

King of the Saxons, Witikind, who hated everything Christian, disguised himself as a pilgrim and entered Charlemagne's camp. It was during Holy Week. He assisted at the ceremonies of that week, and at Mass on Easter Sunday, when Charlemagne and his soldiers received holy Communion, he was astonished to see the priest holding a very small Child, wonderfully bright and beautiful, and giving it to each communicant. He saw how that Child looked happy when placed on the tongue of some, and how He seemed unwilling to be placed on the tongue of others. He could not explain what he saw; later on, upon learning the mystery of the Holy Eucharist, and the difference between a good and a sacrilegious Communion, he was converted, and his conversion was followed by that of all the Saxons.

THE INFINITE POWER OF GOD

Two ladies were once conversing together; the one was a Catholic and the other a Protestant. They were disputing on the subject of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Adorable Sacrament. "It is quite impossible," said the Protestant lady, "that the Body and Blood of Jesus can be really present under the appearance of bread and wine. How *could* it be possible?" "Do you believe in God?" asked the Catholic. "Most certainly," said the other. "And do you believe God can do all things?" "Yes; God can do all things because He is almighty." "Then, if you believe that God can do all things, why do you say that He cannot do this? How can anything be impossible or difficult to Him who can do all things?" "But I cannot understand it," said the other. The Catholic answered: "Is God, then, obliged to limit His works to the things you can understand? Is it not enough that Jesus Christ should tell us what He has done? It is as easy for Him to change the bread and wine into His Body and Blood as it was for Him to create the world out of nothing."

PRAYER BEFORE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

When St. Alphonsus Liguori was an old man, and could not leave his room, his greatest grief was that he could no longer go to visit Jesus present in the holy tabernacle. "Do you not know," he used to say, "that you may obtain more by a quarter of an hour's prayer before the altar than by all the other devotions of the day put together?"

HOLY COMMUNION

The Ark of the Covenant was sacred, and brought blessings and prosperity upon the house of Obededom, but Oza fell dead because he ventured to touch it. In the same way the Blessed Sacrament, of which the Ark of the Covenant was a type, brings blessings upon all worthy communicants, but ruin upon the unworthy. If some find death in the Bread of Life, and receive Satan instead of the pledge of salvation, it is not because Holy Communion brings death or Satan, but because these evils come in punishment for their wickedness and sacrilege. Let no one, therefore, approach the Lord's Table without having on the wedding garment. Let all come pure and stainless, adorned with devotion and virtue. —*P. Hehel, S. J.*

Oh! the wonderful and hidden grace of this Sacrament, which only the faithful of Christ know; but which unbelievers and such as are slaves to sin, cannot experience. In this Sacrament is conferred spiritual grace; lost virtue is repaired in the soul; and beauty, disfigured by sin, returns again.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

The venerable Louis de Blois tells us that a very great servant of God, whom he knew and loved, was one day visited by a soul from Purgatory suffering intense torments. During his lifetime this soul had been a great friend of this servant of God. He said to him: "O my friend, I have been condemned to suffer this intense pain because during life I had received Holy Communion without sufficient preparation and without fervour. I have come to ask you, by that tender friendship we had for each other long ago, to help me now. Go to Holy Communion once for me, and do so with all the fervour and love you can, and I hope that God will accept it as an act of reparation for my want of fervour, and deliver me from these terrible sufferings."

The holy man did so, and the departed soul reappeared to him, full of happiness, and said: "At last, thanks to you, dear friend, I am about to see my adorable Lord and Master face to face in Heaven."

HOLY COMMUNION BENEFITS SOUL AND BODY

And so great sometimes is this grace, that from the abundance of the devotion that is bestowed, not only the mind, but the frail body also feels a great increase of strength.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE FOOD OF THE SOUL

We are made up of two parts, soul and body. We ask God to give us the food we need for our poor body, and He answers us by making the earth produce what is needful to support it. But we also ask Him to nourish our soul, which is the better part of us. But the earth cannot do this; it is by far too little; it hungers after God, and God alone can satisfy it. Therefore, the good God did not consider it too much to come into this world, and take a body like ours, so that His Body might become the nourishment of our souls. "My flesh is meat indeed," says Jesus Christ, "and the bread that I will give you is My flesh for the life of the world."

The food we need for our souls is in the tabernacle. Oh, how beautiful this is. When the priest takes the Sacred Host in his hands and shows it to you, your soul can truly say, this is my food!

O my children, we have far too much happiness! It is only when we get to Heaven that we will be able to understand it.

—*The Curé of Ars.*

THE KEY OF PARADISE

Monsignor de Segur, in his little book on frequent Communion, writes as follows: "If Almighty God were to appear to you, and were to say: 'Do you wish to go to Heaven, My child? and do you wish to have an assurance of your salvation as far as it is possible to have it on earth?' you would immediately answer: 'O my Lord,

from my inmost heart I do desire it.' Well, then, in the Name of that good God, who, for the love of us, remains on earth in the Holy Eucharist, I am going to present you with this key of Paradise. I am going to offer you, in His Name, the passport which will certainly admit you into Heaven. My child, this key of Paradise is 'Regular Confession and Communion every week.' Make, then, the following resolution: "As far as lies in my power, I will never let a week pass without giving new life to my soul by a good Confession and a good Communion. I lay this resolution at the feet of the Blessed Virgin, praying her to obtain for me the grace never to depart from it.'"

THE STRENGTH GIVEN IN HOLY COMMUNION

A certain gentleman went to visit a hospital which was under the care of the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul. During the time of his visit an operation had to be performed on one of the patients, which caused her intense pain, and her cries of anguish resounded throughout the house, rending the hearts of all who heard them. The gentleman could not endure them, and instantly left the ward. The sisters alone remained calm and firm at the side of the poor woman. "How can these good sisters stand there so courageously," he asked of the Superioress, "when even I, who have strong nerves, cannot endure it any longer?" "Sir," she replied, pointing to the door of the tabernacle in their little chapel, "it is there where they get that courage and strength you so much admire. It is Jesus Himself who gives it to them in the Holy Eucharist."

THE DIVINE FUEL

A Protestant minister, who admired the heroism and wonderful success of the Sisters of Charity in caring for the sick and the unfortunate, was desirous of starting similar works of charity. He therefore applied to the Superior General of these sisters for information. The Superior General took him through a number of their institutions and gave him all the necessary information and explanations concerning their working. When the minister was about to take his leave, the Superior General said to him: "My dear sir, I am sorry to say, you will never succeed.' "Why not?" "Because, although you can imitate the machinery of these institutions, you do not possess the fuel to make it go." By the fuel he meant Holy Communion, which alone promotes and keeps up the heroism requisite for such works.

THE BRAVE OFFICER

In the great European war, an officer, who was a man of great piety, received an order to attack one of the enemy's strongholds. In an instant he was at his post at the head of his men, and rushed forward to the attack. The onset was terrible, but in the midst of the glittering bayonets and the showers of bullets, the officer was as calm as if he were on parade or at review. His bravery gained the day, and the fort was captured.

His General, who had witnessed the scene went to meet him. "O Colonel," he cried out, "what bravery! Where did you learn

to be so calm and so self-possessed in the midst of such imminent danger?" "General,' the officer answered, with sublime simplicity, "I received Holy Communion this morning."

All who heard this answer were filled with admiration at so much courage and piety.

It is Holy Communion that gains for us also strength to overcome our spiritual enemies.

THE VISION OF A DEVOUT COMMUNICANT

Father Hunolt, of the Society of Jesus, relates that two students once agreed that, if God would allow it, he who should die first would appear to the other and tell him how he fared in the next world. Shortly afterwards one of them died, and appeared, by permission of God, to his fellow-student, all shining with heavenly glory, and told him that by the mercy of God he was saved, and was in possession of the bliss of Heaven. The other congratulated him on his happiness, and asked him how he had merited such unspeakable glory and bliss. The happy soul replied: "By the care with which I always endeavoured to receive Holy Communion with a pure heart." At these words the spirit disappeared, leaving in the other feelings of great consolation, and an ardent desire of imitating his great devotion, that he might one day join him in Heaven in the possession of the same unspeakable joy.

THE GREAT SUPPER

Thanks to thee, O Thou Creator and Redeemer of men, who, to manifest Thy love to the whole world, hast prepared a great supper, wherein Thou hast set before us to be eaten, not the typical lamb, but Thy most sacred Body and Blood; rejoicing all the faithful with Thy holy banquet, and replenishing them with the cup of salvation, in which are all the delights of paradise: and the holy angels do feast with us, but with a more happy sweetness.

—Thomas à Kempis.

FOOD AND LIGHT FOR THE SOUL

For in this life I find there are two things especially necessary for me, without which this miserable life would be insupportable. Whilst I am kept in the prison of the body, I acknowledge myself to need two things, food and light. Thou hast, therefore, given to me, weak as I am, Thy sacred Body for the nourishment of my soul and body, and Thou hast set Thy word "as a light to my feet" (Ps. CXVIII).

—Thomas à Kempis.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

An old soldier once had a collection of medals and pictures adorning the walls of his room, in which collection was one little print, soiled, torn, and so faded that one could hardly make out what it was. A friend coming to visit him one day, and scanning his souvenirs, asked: "What is this, so old and faded, that apparently holds the place of honour among all your treasures?" "That," answered the aged man, "is the most precious of them all. This picture I received at my first Holy Communion—it is the token of the promises I then made to God. It is faded because I carried

it with me wherever I went. In camp and on the battlefield, it never left me. When I was in trouble, I had only to raise my eyes to that talisman, and all sorrow vanished. New courage again became mine to face the battle of life. Now I am an old man. Soon I must die, but when that last hour comes, I hope that same picture, reminding me of my first Communion, will give me strength to meet the final struggle."—*Frederick Reuter.*

THREE KINDS OF COMMUNICANTS

The Council of Trent distinguished three kinds of communicants. Some receive the Holy Eucharist merely *in a sacramental manner, i. e.,* they receive a consecrated Host, but they do so with hearts defiled, not having contritely confessed their sins, and they come without preparation, without devotion, and consequently they derive no benefit from their Communion.

Others receive the Sacrament merely *in a spiritual manner;* they are unable, for some reason, to receive our Lord sacramentally in a consecrated Host, but they have a great longing to do so, and hence they receive Him in spirit, and thus obtain many, though not all, of the benefits conferred by the Sacrament.

Others again receive our Lord's Body both *sacramentally and spiritually,* and they are those who examine themselves well beforehand, as the Apostle commands, and with pure hearts approach the altar and receive this holy Sacrament, which is to them the source of grace, life and salvation.—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

THE LAITY NOT TO COMMUNICATE UNDER BOTH KINDS

It is forbidden by a law of holy Church that any one but the priests consecrating the Body of the Lord in the sacrifice should receive the holy Eucharist under both kinds without the authority of the Church itself. Christ, the Lord, it is true, instituted, and gave to his Apostles, at His last supper, this most sublime Sacrament under both kinds; but that does not prove that our Lord and Saviour established the law that the sacred mysteries must be administered to all the faithful under both species; for, speaking of this Sacrament, He Himself frequently mentions it under one kind only, as when He says: "If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world;" and: "He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever" (John VI, 58-59).—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

HOLY COMMUNION A SATISFACTION FOR SINS

For there is no oblation more worthy, nor satisfaction greater for the washing away of sins, than to offer up thyself purely and entirely to God, together with the oblation of the Body of Christ, in the Mass and in the Communion. If a man does what lies in him, and is truly penitent as often as he shall come to Me for pardon and grace, as I live saith the Lord, who will not the death of the sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live, I will no longer remember his sins, but all shall be forgiven him (Ezech. XVIII and XXXIII).—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE EXCUSE OF BEING UNWORTHY

We must not abstain from the Bread of Angels because we have not sufficiently tender feelings; it would be like dying of hunger for want of honeycakes.—*St. Ignatius.*

FREQUENT COMMUNION

Thou oughtest often to have recourse to the Fountain of Grace and of Divine Mercy; to the Fountain of all Goodness and all Purity; that thou mayest be healed of thy passions and vices, and be made more strong and vigilant against all the temptations and deceits of the devil. The enemy, knowing the very great advantage and remedy which is in the holy Communion, strives by all means and occasions, as much as he is able, to withdraw and hinder faithful and devout persons from it.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

Let not the faithful deem it enough to receive the Body of the Lord once a year only, in obedience to the authority of this decree; but let them judge that Communion ought to be more frequent, but whether it be more expedient that it should be monthly, weekly, or daily, can be decided by no fixed universal rule. St. Augustine, however, lays down a most certain standard. "Live," says he, "in such a manner as to be able to receive daily." Wherefore it will be the part of the parish priest frequently to exhort the faithful that, as they think it necessary every day to afford nourishment to the body, they should also not neglect daily to feed and nourish the soul with this Sacrament; for it is evident that the soul stands not less in need of spiritual than the body of natural food. And here it will be most beneficial to recapitulate the immense and Divine advantages which, as has been already shown, we derive from the sacramental Communion of the Eucharist. The figure of the manna is also to be added, which it was necessary to use every day, in order to repair the strength of the body (Exod. xvi, 21, *sq.*); and also the authorities of the holy Fathers, who earnestly recommended the frequent participation of this Sacrament; for the words: "Thou sinnest daily; receive daily" are not the sentiments of St. Augustine alone, but also, as any one upon diligent inquiry will easily discover, the sentiment of all the Fathers who wrote on this subject.

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

What doth it avail thee to delay thy confession for a long time, or to put off the holy Communion? Purge thyself with speed, spit out the venom presently, make haste to take this remedy, and thou shalt find it to be better for thee than if thou hadst deferred it for a long time.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

If wordlings ask you why you communicate so often, tell them it is to learn to love God, to purify yourself from your imperfections, to be delivered from your miseries, to be comforted in your afflictions, and supported in your weaknesses. Tell them that two sorts of persons ought to communicate frequently: the perfect, because, being well disposed, they would be greatly to blame not to approach to the source and fountain of perfection, and the imperfect, to the

end that they may be able to acquire perfection; the strong, lest they should become weak, and the weak, that they may become strong; the sick, that they may be restored to health, and the healthy, lest they should fall into sickness; that for your part, being imperfect, weak, and sick, you have need to communicate frequently with Him who is your perfection, your strength, and your physician.

—*St. Francis de Sales.*

FREQUENT COMMUNION A MEANS TO GAIN THE VIRTUE OF PURITY

Father Paul Barry, S.J., tells the story of a man who from his youth upwards had suffered most violent temptations against purity, and had occasionally sinned in deed as well as in thought. Being troubled in conscience, he consulted a priest, who advised him to marry, and then practice chastity according to his state of life. He followed this advice, and for some time enjoyed peace of mind, but, after some years, his wife died, and immediately the same trouble began again. He sought counsel of another priest, who prescribed quite another remedy, for he recommended him to go to Holy Communion every fortnight, assuring him that thus he would gain the virtue of purity. The afflicted man agreed to do so, though with considerable reluctance, but, after he had communicated regularly for some months, he experienced such relief from his horrible temptations that he determined to communicate even more frequently.

Two men, Neander and Theophilus, were one day disputing on the subject of approaching frequently to the Sacraments. "I do not like those who go very often to Communion," said Neander; "many of them seem to me to be full of hypocrisy." Theophilus replied: "As for me, I have very little confidence in those who do not go to Communion at all, or who do not go frequently." Philothea, who heard this dispute, said: "I can show you from experience and from history the truth of what Theophilus asserts. The most wicked men who have ever been in the world, the worst-behaved Christians, and the refuse of humanity, all belong to the class of those who go but seldom, or not at all, to Communion; whereas, on the contrary all the Saints of the Catholic Church, and especially those who were the greatest among them, went to Communion as often as it was possible for them to do so, and tried, as far as they could, to encourage this practice among the faithful."—*St. Francis de Sales.*

When Blessed Thomas More was Chancellor of England some of his friends reproached him for going to Holy Communion so often, considering the great number of his occupations. He answered: "Your reasons for wanting me to stay from Communion are exactly the ones that cause me to go so often. My distractions are great, but it is in Communion that I recollect myself. Many times a day have I temptations; it is by daily Communion I get the strength to overcome them. I have many weighty affairs to manage, and I have need of light and wisdom to manage them; it is for this very reason that I go every day to consult Jesus about them in Holy Communion."

EASTER COMMUNION

That the Church in her solicitude for the spiritual welfare of her children found it imperative to institute such a precept, should fill the souls of the faithful with shame and confusion. Why should such a precept be necessary? Is it thus that the gratitude of Christians is shown for this mystery of unfathomable love? Going back in spirit through the corridors of time to the room of the Last Supper and the touching scene in the Garden of Olives, on the memorable night of the institution of this august Sacrament, who could ever believe that the ingratitude of Christians should force the Church to bind them by a law under the severest penalties to partake of this mystery of eternal love?—*J. A. M. Gillis.*

Lest possibly any may be rendered more negligent to receive this Sacrament, by the supposed labour and difficulty of so great a preparation, the faithful are frequently to be admonished that to all is addressed the law that obliges to the reception of the holy Eucharist; and it has been moreover, declared by the Church, that whoever shall not have communicated at least once a year, at Easter, subjects himself to excommunication.

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Our Lord one day appeared to Sister Paula, a holy nun who dwelt in Naples, with two vessels in His hands, the one of gold and the other of silver. As she was wondering what this could signify, Jesus said to her: "My daughter, I keep in the golden vessel all your Sacramental Communions, and in the silver one your Spiritual Communions."

If we are deprived of Sacramental Communion, let us replace it as far as we can by Spiritual Communions. We can do this at every moment, for we ought at every moment to have a burning desire to receive the good God."—*The Curé of Ars.*

BENEDICTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Experience has shown that the beautiful rite of Benediction, loved by Catholics with a peculiar love that only a Catholic can have, appeals also very strongly, indeed, to very many non-Catholics who may happen to be present at that service of the Church. Many conversions are recorded as the result of the life-giving influence of the real Presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and of His blessing imparted in the rite of Benediction.—*H. G. Hughes.*

SACRIFICE

Now in the pages of the Old Testament, and in the traditions of all nations, we find records of a mode of worshiping God, unique in its nature, the Rite of Sacrifice, which owing to its universality and substantial identity, cannot be referred to any period later than the cradle-time of the human race, when men all formed one family. This Rite of Sacrifice consisted in the offering up, upon an altar or place of sacrifice, of some material thing, the best of its kind, either the fruits of the earth or the choicest of the flock or herd, and next,

in the destruction, or rather change, of the substance of these things, by fire or by manducation. Sacrifice, therefore, had its consummation in this destruction or change of substance, which constituted the essence of the mystical rite.—*W. Lockhart.*

WORSHIP WITHOUT SACRIFICE LIKE THE CROSS WITHOUT CHRIST

The Cross without the figure of Him who made the Cross glorious, is an apt type of the worship without a sacrifice, of the church without the adorable Presence, of a religion without the inward life of the Spirit. Though a Catholic church be poor and small, though even the accustomed, silent worshipers be absent, still the veiled Tabernacle and the red glimmering of the lamp witness a Presence which fills the place with warmth and life. We feel that it is a home, the home of Jesus in His sacramental life, and we can say with most solemn conviction, "How terrible is this place! This is no other but the House of God and the Gate of Heaven" (Gen. XXVIII, 17).

—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

A certain Saint while attending holy Mass had a remarkable vision. He beheld in the church a tree spreading its branches throughout the holy place. From the branches of the tree lovely flowers fell down upon those present, but in a peculiar manner. Some of the flowers dropped beside worshippers upon the ground; some fell upon the heads of others, but immediately faded; while other flowers rested upon the heads of worshippers and retained all their beauty and freshness. This tree was a symbol of the blessings that during the Saviour's unbloody sacrifice in holy Mass are abundantly poured out upon mankind, when the Divine gifts of Grace drop down like magnificent flowers. In the instance of indifferent persons they fall unavailing to the ground; lukewarm worshippers receive them, but let them wither without making use of them; while they stay with, and adorn, God-fearing souls.—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

HOLY MASS

As often as thou sayest or hearest Mass, it ought to seem to thee as great, new, and delightful as if Christ that same day, first descending into the Virgin's womb, had been made man: or, hanging on the Cross, was suffering and dying for the salvation of mankind.

—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE PERFECT SACRIFICE

The Sacrifice on Calvary was a perfect sacrifice. But there was no Communion there, and for this reason we do not believe Communion to be the essence of the sacrifice.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

Melchisedech, the king of Salem, bringing forth bread and wine, for he was the Priest of the Most High God,—Blessed him and said: Blessed be Abram by the Most High God, who created Heaven and earth.—Gen. XIV, 18-19.

Christ also hath loved us, and hath delivered Himself for us, an Oblation and a Sacrifice to God for an odour of sweetness.—Eph. V, 2.

I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts: and I will not receive a gift of your hand.—For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, My Name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is Sacrifice, and there is offered to My Name a clean Oblation: for My Name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts.—Mal. I, 10-11.

HOLY MASS SATISFIES DIVINE JUSTICE

Which of us can turn to God without experiencing a sense of guiltiness? What is it that makes us dread death but the appalling prospect of having to give an account of our lives to Him in whose sight even the angels are not pure? And as we shrink at the thought of that dread ordeal, we long for some powerful being to plead our cause. Conscious of our weakness, and convinced of our poverty, we know that no multiplication of penance, not even the immolation of our life, would adequately satisfy for the offenses we have committed against the Sovereign Majesty. In the Mass, however, each one of us has an infinite satisfaction to present to God for his personal account. Through it, if we will, Jesus Christ satisfies the Divine justice for us, and invokes upon our head mercy and pardon.

—Bishop John S. Vaughan.

THE SACRIFICE OF CALVARY AND THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

Although the sacrifice of Calvary and that of the Mass are one and the same, yet there are some accidental differences. There is a difference of purpose and a difference in the manner of offering. On Calvary the sacrifice was offered for the redemption of mankind, and, in this respect, was completed once for all. But its efficacy was not, there and then, applied to every soul that needed it. This was to be the work of time, and the means by which that efficacy was to be wrought were to be the sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacraments. Further, the sacrifice on Calvary was one in which there was real bloodshedding and death. But the sacrifice of the Mass is like that of Melchisedech, a clean sacrifice, without blood and death. The Priest and Victim, however, are the same. In the Mass the chief Priest is Christ Himself; the human priest, who celebrates, is but His minister. In the Mass the Victim is Christ Himself, really present under the forms of bread and wine. Whatever good, therefore, we derive through the Mass has its source and origin in the Sacrifice of Calvary. The Mass, therefore, although it does represent Calvary, is not merely a representation. It is a representation and mystical continuation and repetition of Calvary.

—Thomas J. Gerrard.

HEARING HOLY MASS

St. Isidore was a poor labourer who worked for a rich farmer. St. Isidore loved dearly to be at Mass every day. His employer and fellow-servants found fault with him for hearing Mass every day, and charged him with neglecting his work in order to do so. One day the farmer, with the intention of rebuking him, went out into the field which the Saint had been ordered to plough. Isidore was

not there, for he was then hearing Mass in the neighbouring church, but the farmer beheld an angel ploughing in place of Isidore. His employer nevermore found fault with Isidore for going to Mass, but thanked God for giving him a workman who brought Heaven's blessing on his farm.—*Ferreol Girardey, C.SS.R.*

THE PRIEST GOD'S REPRESENTATIVE

Christ continues as the invisible High Priest to offer the Holy Mass to God; His visible representative on earth is the priest, who at the same time is the representative of the people, on whose behalf the sacrifice is carried out. He is not merely chosen and appointed; he is consecrated by the Sacrament which imparts to him a share in the priesthood of Jesus Christ. This character is not something merely attached to his personality, as an office; it enters into and forms a feature of his very soul, never to be effaced in time or eternity. No wonder that the Church has surrounded the ordination of a priest with the most impressive ceremonies of her ritual.

—*James J. Fox.*

GOD HIGHER THAN THE KING

It is related in the life of Blessed Thomas More, that he never omitted to hear Mass, no matter how many or how great his occupations were. One day while he was hearing Mass, a messenger from the king came to him to say that His Majesty required his immediate presence, to consult him on a matter of the greatest importance. The holy man sent back this answer to the king: "Tell His Majesty to have a little patience, as I am at this moment engaged with a Sovereign who is higher than he, for I am hearing Mass. As soon as my audience with the King of Heaven is ended, I will at once obey the desire of my earthly king."

DISTRACTION AT HOLY MASS

The story is told of an aged peasant woman who, in order to obtain a special favour from God, made a promise to hear a certain number of Masses during the year. She kept her promise and attended Mass every day, rain or shine. On returning home she was wont to put a bean in a little bag, so as to keep count of the Masses heard. When she thought she had heard the promised number of Masses she opened the bag, but—oh, horror, of the many beans she had placed within it, but a single one was there. She was much alarmed at this, and confided the matter to a priest, who put a few questions to her, as to what she had done on the way to church, and with what devotion she had assisted at the Masses. It was discovered that on the way to church she had gossiped with others about the faults of neighbours, whilst during Mass she had hardly ever thought of Divine things. The priest then said to her: "Do you see the reason why all these Masses were lost to you? Your gossip, your curiosity, you voluntary distractions, have robbed you of your merits. Meanwhile thank God that at least one Mass heard has been profitable to you."

—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

PENANCE

PENANCE A CONSEQUENCE OF SIN

Penance, let us bear in mind, formed no part of God's original plan. It is one of the consequences of sin; a penalty we have brought upon ourselves. God destined man for happiness. His will was that man should live in a state of sweet content, unoppressed by pain and sorrow. God created him innocent and joyous; surrounded him with all that could administer to his wants and promote his well-being. And, had man only remained faithful and obedient he would have known nothing of anguish, or shame. Quite the contrary! His life would have been one of unclouded pleasure and delight in this world, only to be succeeded by a state of eternal pleasure and delight in the next.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

Unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish.—Luke XIII, 3.

If the wicked do penance for all his sins which he hath committed, and keep all My commandments, and do judgment and justice, living he shall live, and shall not die.—Ez. XVIII, 21.

The Lord delayeth not His promise, as some imagine, but dealeth patiently for your sake, not willing that any should perish, but that all should return to penance.—II. Peter, III, 9.

Say to the children of Israel: When a man or woman shall have committed any of all the sins that men are wont to commit, and by negligence shall have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and offended,—They shall confess their sin, and restore the principal itself, and the fifth part over and above, to him against whom they have sinned.—Numb. V, 6-7.

I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.—Jer. XXXI, 34.

Delay not to be converted to the Lord, and defer it not from day to day.—For His wrath shall come on a sudden, and in the time of vengeance He will destroy thee.—Ecclus. V, 8, 9.

NO SIN WITHOUT PUNISHMENT

What you have done cannot remain unpunished; and wherein a man has sinned, he shall also be chastised; hence you must either punish yourself, or God will punish you.—*St. Augustine.*

PENITENCE

No sin remains without punishment, either man administers the punishment, or God.—*St. Theresa.*

Be not without fear about sin forgiven, and add not sin upon sin.—Ecclus. V, 5.

I said I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord; and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin.—Ps. XXXI, 5.

*I confess the sins of the children of Israel by which they have sinned against Thee: I and my father's house have sinned.—We have been seduced by vanity, and have not kept Thy Commandments, and ceremonies, and judgments.—*II. *Esd.* I, 6-7.

COMPUNCTION OF HEART

Yet, that we have not Divine comforts, or seldomer experience them, is our own fault; because we do not seek compunction of heart, nor cast off altogether vain and outward satisfactions.

—Thomas à Kempis.

LIGHT AND STRENGTH FROM GOD NEEDED FOR REPENTANCE

As it was needful that Paul should be taken by the hand and led to the feet of God's minister who was appointed to tell him what he should do, so the soul in sin needs the light of God to see its miserable condition, it needs the strength of God to come to the feet of Christ. Once there, there is no need of further exhortation, because, if God only shows it in its own wretchedness and misery, if it sees the leprosy with which sin covers it, it will pray as the leper prayed, pray not in the usual conventional form, but pray with a strong cry to heaven.—*Thomas F. Burke, C.S.P.*

My son, hast thou sinned? do so no more: but for thy former sins also pray that they may be forgiven thee.—Ecclus. XXI, 1.

I have blotted out thy iniquities as a cloud, and thy sins as a mist: return to Me; for I have redeemed thee.—Is. XLIV, 22.

The bruised reed He shall not break, and the smoking flax He shall not quench. He shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

—Is. XLII, 3.

Return to Me, and I will return to you, saith the Lord of Hosts.

—Mal. III, 7.

Thou therefore, O Son of Man, say to the House of Israel: Thus you have spoken, saying: Our iniquities and our sins are upon us, and we pine away in them: how then can we live?—Say to them: As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live.—Ez. XXXIII, 10-11.

My son, in thy sickness neglect not thyself, but pray to the Lord, and He shall heal thee.—Turn away from sin, and order thy hands aright, and cleanse thy heart from all offence.

—Ecclus. XXXVIII, 9. 13.

THE FATHER'S MERCY

The father of the prodigal son said to his sons: "Bring forth quickly the first robe" (Luke xv, 22). He did not say: "Whence did you come, where have you been, what did you do with your

inheritance?". Thus you see that true love does not see the sins. The father's mercy was not deliberating.—*St. Peter Chrysologus.*

PENITENT SAINTS IN THE MAJORITY

The penitent Saints have far outnumbered the innocent Saints. The evident design of God has been to permit them to sink low and to rise again in order to give courage to despairing sinners. The word of God must be justified before the world that the Blood of Jesus is able to blot out *all* sin.—*H. G. Hughes.*

EQUALITY BEFORE GOD

When Pius IV. lay dying there came to him in haste one who loved him tenderly, and who was in turn most specially beloved by the dying pontiff, St. Charles Borromeo. And as he threw himself on his knees besides the bed, and felt the trembling hand of the old man resting on his head: "Holy Father," he said, "dear Holy Father, grant me one last favour, only one, and yet the greatest of all. Oh, dear Holy Father, the time has come for you to appear before God. Forget everything and everybody else, and think only of your own soul."—*Raphael Moss, O.P.*

THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE FOR SINNERS

We adore the Divine goodness and mercy of Jesus, manifested in the gentle words to Judas. It is our consolation. No matter how seriously and frequently we have sinned, there is hope.

—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

JUDAS MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABSOLVED

If that unfortunate traitor, Judas (after the Apostles had received the power of forgiving sins), instead of hanging himself as he did, and so losing his soul for ever, had gone to St. Peter and said to him: "Will you hear any confession?" St. Peter would have said: "Yes, kneel down and begin." "O Peter, what a miserable wretch I have been! It was I who betrayed and sold Our Divine Master." "Judas," St. Peter would have said, "I did worse than you, for I declared three times, even with an oath, that I did not know Him. Make your act of sincere contrition, and I will give you absolution."

But, alas! Judas did not repent, and, like many who have followed his wicked example in betraying their Divine Master by committing sin, and neglecting to avail themselves of the Sacrament of Penance, was lost for ever.

If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow: and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool.—Is. I, 18.

Be penitent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.—Acts. III, 19.

THE LOVE OF A MOTHER: A PICTURE OF THE LOVE OF GOD

Some years ago, there was a poor widow who had an only son. She loved this son dearly, and spared no pains to instil into his heart the principles of virtue. But when he grew up he began to go

with wicked companions, and soon became the scandal of the neighbourhood. He even struck his mother, and threatened to kill her. This unhappy young man soon gave himself up to every crime, but the day of retribution came at last; he was arrested and cast into prison. One day a stranger knocked at the prison door. The jailer came to see who it was, and learned to his surprise that it was the mother of this wicked young man. "Ah!" said she, weeping, "I wish to see my son." "What!" said the jailer in astonishment, "do you wish to see that wretch? Have you forgotten all that he has done to you?" "Ah! I know it well," replied the widow, "but he is my son." "But has he not struck you and abused you, and even threatened to kill you?" said the jailer. "That is quite true," was the answer; "but I am still his mother, and he is my son." "But," again cried the jailer, "he has not only abused you and robbed you, but he has even shamefully abandoned you; such an unnatural son is not fit to live." "Ah! but he is my child, and I am his mother." And the poor widow sobbed and wept, till at last the jailer was touched, and permitted her to enter the prison; and the fond mother threw her arms round the neck of that unnatural, ungrateful son, and pressed him again and again to her breaking heart.

God loves us poor sinners even more than a mother loves her child. With what confidence, then, ought you to hope for pardon when you are sorry for having offended Him!

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE A COURT OF MERCY

I said that the Sacrament of Penance is a court of justice—but, indeed, it is rather a court of mercy. Justice, strict justice, indeed, has been done for all sins; but it was done upon that Innocent One who hung upon the Cross; and it is because of the dreadful punishment borne by Him that in the sacred tribunal of Penance the sentence is always one of mercy, if certain conditions are fulfilled by the accused. Yes, the one object of the tribunal of Penance is to pass a sentence, not of condemnation, but of release, of acquittal, of full and free forgiveness. It is true that a sentence of condemnation *may* be pronounced; that is, the sinner may be left under the condemnation that he has already brought upon himself by his own act; for the Divine commission to the Apostles, and through them to their successors, was not only to loose, but to *bind;* not only to forgive, but to *retain* sins. But, thank God, the sentence of condemnation, of binding, of retaining, is rarely pronounced; and, if it be pronounced, it is the fault of the sinner; primarily the Sacrament of Penance is intended as a tribunal of reconciliation and pardon.—*H. G. Hughes.*

WHAT ST. FRANCIS THOUGHT OF A PENITENT

It is related that a young man once went to confession to St. Francis de Sales, and after having confessed with genuine sorrow the great offenses he had committed against God, he said to the Saint: "Father, what do you think of me when you hear such enormous sins?" "My son," answered the holy man, "what do I think of you? I think that you are a Saint. A moment ago you were God's enemy, but now the Almighty has pardoned you and made you one of His elect."

THE POWER TO FORGIVE SIN ALSO CLAIMED BY THE STATE

It is not easy to understand the objection of those who reject the idea that the Church of God has the power to forgive sin. Every organization claims this power and exercises it. Even the sects, while denying it in theory, claim it in practice, for when a member has violated their ordinances they may expel him, but, on his repenting and fulfilling certain conditions, they receive him back again. The state also, and every association, no matter for what purpose originated, all have ways and means by which a delinquent member may be restored to full fellowship. Now, why should not this be the case in that society instituted by Christ to impart the merits of His redemption to individuals? Surely there must be some way in which a man, who has been so unfortunate to lose his citizenship in that kingdom, may be reinstated.—*F. G. Lentz.*

A SAINT'S PREPARATION FOR CONFESSION

A holy bishop, who lived in the last century, used to make three stations, after examining his conscience: the first in hell, the second in Heaven and the third on Mount Calvary. He thought of hell, and how he deserved to be there, and he thanked God for having preserved him from it, and prayed for grace to avoid it to the end. He thought of Heaven, that might have been closed to him by his sins, and he called upon the Saints to pray for his admission thither. These two stations served to awaken holy fear in his heart. In order to kindle his love he made the third station on Mount Calvary, and there contemplated his crucified Saviour, saying: "This is my doing. I have caused His suffering, and with other sinners I have nailed Him to the Cross. O Jesus, how could I treat Thee thus? Thou hast loved me infinitely, and I ought to love Thee infinitely, were I capable of doing so. Because Thou art infinitely worthy of love, I love Thee and repent of having sinned against Thee."—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

THE VISION OF ST. ARSENIUS

St. Arsenius once saw in a vision the pitiable state of souls defiled with mortal sin that they are unwilling to remove by confession. An angel appeared to him and said: "Come with me, I will show you how men busy themselves in the world." St. Arsenius was at once transported to a great forest, where there was a man trying to carry a great bundle of wood on his shoulders. The load being too heavy, he went to fetch some more logs, as if by having a greater weight to carry he would be better able to lift it.

The angel then led Arsenius to a spring, where were some people engaged in drawing water and pouring it into a barrel full of holes. Whilst the Saint gazed in wonder at this strange proceeding, the angel said: "Come with me; I will show you something still more surprising," and they walked on until they met two men, who were trying in vain to pass through a doorway. Each of them was holding the end of an iron bar, and as this was longer than the doorway was wide, the ends always struck the wall, and their efforts to enter were in vain. Arsenius could not help laughing.

"Tell me," said he to the angel, "who these fools are and what they want to do." The angel looked grave, however, as he replied: "These men resemble those proud people who fancy themselves irresistible; they may try very hard to enter Heaven, but they will not humble themselves so as to pass through the narrow gate. The man with the bundle of wood is like a sinner who, instead of diminishing his load by confession and penance, adds to it by bad confessions, until at last he is crushed under the ever-increasing burden. The people pouring water into the barrel full of holes are like those who do many good works, but also commit many sins; and because they do not at once repent of their sins and confess them, all the merit of their good works, performed whilst they are in a state of mortal sin, is lost."—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

PARDON PROMISED, BUT NOT DELAY

He who has promised pardon to penitents, has not promised to-morrow to sinners.—*St. Gregory.*

Boast not for to-morrow, for thou knowest not what the day to come may bring forth.—Prov. XXVII, 1.

RELYING ON A DEATHBED CONVERSION

In the reign of Henry VIII. of England there lived a man notorious for his frivolous life and many crimes. The Blessed Thomas More, having visited him on one occasion, begged him to change his evil life and do penance. "Oh! don't be alarmed about me," replied the hardened sinner. "I shall one day repent. There are three little words that shall act as a talisman for me at the last—'Lord, pardon me.'" "Ah! my friend," answered Blessed Thomas, "take care. You may lose your soul." But the advice was lost on the unfortunate man; he continued to live in sin as before.

Not long afterwards, it happened that, being on horseback, he had to cross a bridge that spanned a deep river. A mere trifle caused the horse to start, and with one wild bound the animal jumped with its luckless rider over the parapet into the river. The onlookers heard his words, "May the devil—," but the curse died on the lips that uttered it, for the unhappy man was never seen alive again. Such is the risk of relying on a deathbed conversion.

—*Frederick Reuter.*

Because I called, and you refused; I stretched out My hand, and there was none that regarded.—You have despised all My counsel, and have neglected My reprehensions.—Prov. I, 24-25.

Behold, the hand of the Lord is not shortened that it cannot save, neither is His ear heavy that it cannot hear—But your iniquities have divided between you and your God, and your sins have hid His Face from you that He should not hear.—Is. LIX, 1-2.

TEMPTED TO DESPAIR

The way of human life has been likened to a great altar stairs that sweeps up to the mercy seat of the Almighty. We figure men

erect of form, with eyes fixed upon the light, advancing and ascending, step above step into the very tabernacle of God. When, therefore, we consider ourselves and our own progress we are tempted to despair. We climb painfully, we stumble, we are dragged down. The light is blurred, the very stairs grow dim, we grope in vain, and helpless and hopeless, we lie down in the mire.—*P. C. Yorke.*

In the life of St. Philip Neri it is related that there was once a nun whom the devil tempted to despair. He tried to make her think that it would be quite impossible for her to get to Heaven, because she had so often offended God during the course of her life. The temptation made her very miserable, and all the words of encouragement that kind friends said to her did not bring back peace to her soul. St. Philip, hearing of this, went one day to see her. Everyone looked upon him as a great Saint, and followed his advice as if they had heard it from the lips of Jesus Christ Himself. So the nun was very glad when she was told that he wanted to speak to her. "My child," he said, "can you tell me the reason why the Son of God came down from Heaven and died upon the Cross?" "Yes, Father, it was for poor sinners—to save them from hell, and to open Heaven for them." "Now tell me," said the Saint, "what are you? Are you not a sinner?" "Oh, yes, Father, I am a great sinner; I have offended God so much." "Well, since that is the case, it was specially for you that Jesus came—to purchase the Kingdom of Heaven for you." These words had the desired effect. The good religious now saw how Satan had been trying to deceive her. From that time till the day of her happy death the thoughts of despair never gave her any more trouble.

SAVED FROM DESPAIR

One day St. Francis de Sales was informed that there was in the prison of the city in which he dwelt, a man condemned to death, and who was crying out in despair that he was lost. The Saint, full of compassion, went to the prison to try to prepare him for a happy death. "It is quite useless," said the unhappy man, when he discovered why the Saint had come; "it is quite useless to speak to me of God's mercy, for there is no hope for me." "But, my son," said the Saint, "would you not rather be with God in Heaven for ever than with Satan?" "Certainly," he answered; "but what can God do for such a wretch as I am?" "Ah, my son, it was for sinners such as you that Jesus Christ came from Heaven." "But would it not be an insult, for a criminal like me to have recourse to the mercy of God?" "An insult!" exclaimed the Saint. "On the contrary, it would be an insult to Him if you thought that He would refuse to pardon sinners for whom He died." "But is not God just? If so, then He must condemn me, because I have been so wicked." "Yes, God is just, but He is also merciful, and He will pardon you, if only you with a humble and contrite heart ask His forgiveness." Touched by these words, the poor man burst into tears, and cried out: "Then, O my Jesus, I throw myself into the arms of Thy mercy; I give myself entirely to Thee." And he died a most edifying death.

EXCUSES FOR SINNING

The greatest error of man is that after committing sin he seeks his refuge in excuses, as though this meant a manifestation of penitence. It is grievously sinful to do this because it is proof that the sinner is not truly penitent. "Incline not my heart to evil words: to make excuse in sins." (Psalm 140, IV.)—*Cassiodorus.*

CONFESSION

He who is afflicted with an ulcer must, if he wish to be cured, show it to a physician: otherwise it will fester and bring on death.
—*St. John Chrysostom.*

THE CONFESSION OF SINS

If you yourself do not uncover your sin, God will uncover it. If you, as man, hide your sin, He, as God, will make it public. Hence He proclaims through the prophet: "I will discover thy shame to thy face, and will show thy nakedness to the nations, and thy shame to kingdoms." (Nahum III, 5).—*St. Thomas of Villanova.*

ASHAMED TO CONFESS SINS

St. Antonius relates, that a holy solitary once saw the devil standing beside a certain person who wished to go to confession. The solitary asked the fiend what he was doing there. The enemy said in reply: "I now restore to the penitents what I before took away from them; I took away from them shame while they were committing sin; I now restore it that they may have a horror of confession."

THE SEAL OF CONFESSION

In 1889, Father Dumoulin, a French priest, was condemned to live all his life on a desert island with the worst of criminals, because he had been condemned for murdering and robbing a rich woman. The priest made no defense at the trial. Some years after, the priest's sacristan, being about to die, acknowledged that he himself had murdered and robbed that rich woman and that he had gone at once to confession to Father Dumoulin, in order to keep his lips sealed, and had arranged things so as to throw all suspicion on the priest. Thus the innocent and faithful priest suffered public disgrace and terrible punishment rather than betray the seal of confession.
—*Ferreol Girardey, C. SS. R.*

THE QUALITIES OF A GOOD CONFESSION

The qualities of a good confession are, in the first place, that it should be *humble*. It is the avowal of repeated acts of revolt and treachery against the King of Kings; and, like the repentant prodigal and humble publican, we should both in word and feeling avow in all modesty and humility our guilt. Next, it should be *simple, i. e.,* limited to a truthful statement of our misdeeds, without excuses on one side or exaggeration on the other. Again, our confession should be *sincere,* telling our sins as they are—mortal, venial, certain or doubtful—laying bare, in fact, our guilt, as we candidly think it to be in the sight of Almighty God. Lastly, our confession should be *entire* and complete; *i. e.,* an honest declaration of all our grievous

sins, with any attending circumstances that may change the nature of the sin. Wilfully to conceal a mortal sin in confession is to lie to the Holy Ghost and commit a sacrilege.—*William Graham.*

SELF-ACCUSATION A SURE SIGN OF CONTRITION

And behold the Divine insight into human nature of Our Lord when He made this self-accusation of the sinner the condition of forgiveness! It is the surest sign of contrition and the first step toward conversion. He who accuses himself of an action shows his detestation for it; he punishes himself for it by the confusion which the avowal causes. Moreover, by this confession he declares the deed to be his no longer; he cherishes it no more in his heart, and regards it as a thing to be condemned and that he would wish to disown. So the confession manifests a thorough change of heart. This is the meaning of confession; it is an outward protestation that we have severed all internal connection with our sins, that we no longer suffer them in our hearts and minds and souls.

—*Charles Bruehl.*

THE PEACE RESULTING FROM CONFESSION

Where is the Catholic that has not some time in his life experienced the comfort of heart that comes from confession; that has not thanked God some time most fervently for this great blessing? If so, it was at that period of life when he had dreaded it most and kept shy of it most studiously for many days; when he had almost begun to hate it, as the enemies of the Church; when it had nearly become for him a stumbling block and a scandal. A darker hour had led him into a more disgraceful deed; he felt the whole shamefulness of his guilt; he was sick at the thought of manifesting his secret shame to man; why, he could not have whispered it to himself aloud. So he detested this institution that compelled him to divulge the sad secret of his shame and frailty to a fellowman. But he found not peace; remorse tugged violently at his heart; the shadow of his sin was always with him. With great repugnance he approached the sacred tribunal; in an agony of confusion he confessed his foul deed. And forthwith peace was restored to his tortured mind; the terrible burden was taken from his heart; the memory of his sin lost its galling bitterness. Then he blessed this holy institution, which he had dreaded so much.—*Charles Bruehl.*

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE RESTORES TO THE SOUL ITS SPLENDOUR

St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi once saw a soul in the state of grace, and its splendor was so overwhelming that she almost fainted at the sight. Sin destroys all this beauty and stains the soul, rendering it so hideous that good spirits shrink from it in horror, but the Sacrament of Penance restores it. The evil done cannot indeed be undone, but all the stains resulting from it are obliterated. The same Saint was once in the convent chapel when one of the religious was in the confessional, and she saw an angel letting drops of Blood fall from a chalice upon the sister as she knelt. The Blood had scarcely touched her when she began to shine like the sun, and St. Mary Magdalen, full of holy zeal, exclaiming: "Sprinkle me, too," hastened to the confessional.—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

A SMALL PENANCE FOR GREAT SINS

St. Bernard was the means of the conversion of a great sinner called Arnold, who held a high position in the world. This man made to the Saint a sincere and humble confession of all the sins and crimes he had committed. St. Bernard mingled his tears of joy with the tears of contrition which flowed from the eyes of the penitent, and imposed on him as a penance to say three times the "Our Father."

On hearing these words Arnold looked with sadness into the face of the Saint. "O my Father," he said, "do not mock me in this way. A fast of seven years, or even of ten years, and to lie on a bed of ashes, would not be enough to make reparation for my past sinful life; and you give me as a penance only three times the 'Our Father.'" St. Bernard answered: "My son, do you think that you know better than I what penance ought to be given you?" "Far be it from me to be presumptuous," replied Arnold; "but I beg of you do not spare me now, that I may reach Heaven hereafter, and give me a penance which will in some way make reparation for my evil life." St. Bernard said: "My son, do as I tell you, and keep in the state of grace, and I promise you that, when life is over, you shall enter into the repose of God in Heaven."

THE CHOICE OF A CONFESSOR

Everyone who wishes to overcome sin and advance in Christian perfection should seek a good and experienced confessor. This choice is by far more important than that of a family physician. Yet great care is exercised in the latter. Not every confessor, however learned and zealous he be, will appeal to every penitent. Pray fervently to the Holy Ghost that He may help you to find a discreet, saintly and enlightened confessor.—*Charles Bruehl.*

The devil keeps an account of your sins to charge you with them at the tribunal of Jesus Christ. Do you wish to prevent this accusation? Anticipate your accuser: accuse yourself now to a confessor, and then no accuser shall appear against you at the judgment-seat of God. But, according to St. Augustine, if you excuse yourself in confession you shut up sin within your soul, and shut out pardon.—*St. Ambrose.*

THE OBLIGATION TO CONFESS SINS DENIED BY PROTESTANTS

In non-Catholic countries the practice of confessing one's sins is either not followed at all, or else, as in the Anglican establishment, it is left to such pious souls as might feel a longing to unburden themselves to the "minister of God." And the reason is abundantly obvious. Naturally, no one really likes to openly own up to his faults. No one feels any special delight in exposing his hidden sins and disgraceful actions, his ingratitude and meannesses, and the like. He will, assuredly, evade the ordeal if he can. It is a deep humiliation, but a most salutary one, since pride is at the bottom of all spiritual troubles. Hence, Protestants vociferously deny that there is any obligation to confess. They are obliged to acknowledge that Christ gave the Apostles and their successors the power to forgive sins, for that is *explicitly* stated, but they deny that any obligation

exists to disclose what it is that they have done amiss. They do not see the necessity because they do not want to see. It would be disagreeable to have to recognize a duty which is so difficult of fulfilment. So they make up their minds not to recognize it. Yet it is quite evidently contained in the very words of institution.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

SELF DISCIPLINE

In this does man's dignity consist that he has free will. God gave him the choice of good or evil. When he chooses good he has the merit of choosing it; when he chooses evil he has to bear the responsibility. Nothing that happens to him against his will can be charged to him. He is free and independent—the master of himself.

Therefore, if he is to undergo discipline that will avail unto salvation it must be self-discipline. His own will must curb and check his own energies and direct them aright if he is to be forceful for good. This truth did our Lord proclaim when He said: "If any man would come after Me let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow Me."—*P. C. Yorke.*

KNOWLEDGE OF SELF WHOLESOME

Nothing is more important for our self-improvement, more conducive to a change of life than a knowledge of self and our past failings. Generally we are little aware of the many disorders in our daily life; we do not reflect, and we continue in our frivolity and wickedness. If one would place a mirror before our soul, and let us see the imperfections and shortcomings of even one day, we would be terrified at the sight of such a number of sins and their gravity; we would walk more cautiously, do penance and lead a better life. The holy Sacrament of Penance forces this wholesome, but not always relished, knowledge of self and our sins upon us. Since it requires a detailed accusation of our faults, it makes an examination of our conscience necessary. Many would never reflect on their lives, never probe their hearts, never be brought face to face with all their imperfections, were it not for the examination of conscience, exacted by the Sacrament of Penance. Even for this one reason Confession is highly salutary and helpful, because it compels us to know ourselves, and acquaints us with the many sins we thoughtlessly commit.

—*Charles Bruehl.*

BISHOP CHEVERUS AND THE PROTESTANT

The confidence inspired by Mgr. Cheverus, Bishop of Boston, was such that a great number of Protestants of rank and position came to open to him their hearts, and to reveal to him the secrets of their consciences. One of them one day said that the precept of confession would for ever present her from embracing the Catholic Faith. "No, no," said the Bishop, very gently, "you haven't as much repugnance for confession as you imagine: on the contrary, you feel the need and value of it. All these weeks past, you have been coming to me and making a confession without suspecting it. Confession is nothing but making known the troubles of your conscience, as you have been doing to receive my advice."—*Hamon.*

DOCILITY NECESSARY IN THE CONFESSIONAL

Equally important is the spirit of docility necessary in the confessional. The penitent who thinks he is always misunderstood, the one who does not see the necessity of avoiding certain occasions, the one who has an over-wrought mind and hardly knows it, all need a clearer vision, a vision at least clear enough to see the advantage of expert advice. Whenever there is a tendency therefore to resent the pastoral advice given in Confession or even a tendency to pass it over as a formality, then the penitent may profitably place himself in the position of the blind man of Jericho and approach the Sacrament with the prayer, "Lord, that I may see." If the mind had been darkened by sin it must be enlightened by the free gift of grace.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

WHAT SAVAGES DID TO GO TO CONFESSION

"When Holy Mass was done," writes one of the missionaries in his letter, "Oskiloe, one of the chiefs, followed by a great many people belonging to his tribe, came and asked to speak to us. Then, addressing himself to Father Marault, he said: 'O my Father, you have come to us at last! how glad we are to see you! and for such a long time have we been waiting for you! It is now five Sundays since we came here expecting to find you. Our provisions are nearly all gone, and we cannot catch any fish because the rivers are in flood. What will become of us, Father? Nevertheless, we would rather die than go home without going to our Confession this year. This, then, is what we have made up our minds to do. If the fishing still continues bad, we will fast ten days, that we may remain with you and hear God's Holy Word. No doubt this will cause us to suffer much; but that does not matter; we will suffer it all with joy, that we may attend to our souls' salvation. And if at the end of ten days the Great Spirit does not send us any fish, necessity will force us to go home; but it will cause us the greatest sorrow to go away.'"

THE SORROW FOR SINS

A girl was once listening to a sermon, and heard the priest say, that if people want to make a good Confession they must be more sorry for their sins than for anything else. When the sermon was over the girl went to the priest and said, "Please, your reverence, I think I made a bad confession." "Why do you think so?" answered the priest. "You said in your sermon to-day that if we want to make a good Confession our sorrow for sin must be greater than our sorrow for anything else. When I went to Confession I did not cry for my sins. But when my poor mother died I cried very much. So I am afraid that my sorrow for my mother's death was greater than my sorrow for my sins." "Answer me one question," said the priest. "Tell me, if you could bring your mother back to life again by committing a mortal sin, would you commit a mortal sin?" "Oh, no," said the girl, "I would not commit a mortal sin for anything." "Then," said the priest, "you love God really more than your mother. Although you cried for your mother's death and did not cry for your

sins, yet you were really in your heart more sorry for your sins than for your mother's death."—*Furniss.*

"I WEEP BECAUSE YOU DO NOT WEEP."

One day when St. Francis de Sales was hearing Confessions, a man came to his confessional, and accused himself of many grievous sins without showing any signs of sorrow. The Saint began to weep, and continued shedding tears till the man finished his Confession. When it was done he asked the Saint why he wept so much. "My son," he said, "I weep because you do not weep. You have by your great sins crucified the Son of God, and you seem to have no sorrow for what you have done." These few words touched the sinner's heart, and he also began to weep. God showed him at that moment the greatness of his sins, and he became a sincere penitent.

CONTRITION BLOTS OUT SINS

There lived in Paris a young student who had committed many sins. God gave him the grace of sincere repentance. He went to the monastery of St. Victor in that city, and asked to be conducted to the Father Superior. As soon as he had entered the room he fell down at the feet of the priest, and began to make his Confession. But he had scarcely uttered a few words when he stopped. His sorrow was so great that he could not utter another word. "Perhaps, my son," said the father to him, "if you were to write down your sins on a piece of paper, you would be better able to confess them." The student did this, and, going to a table, wrote down the sins he had committed, and then returned to the priest.

As soon as he began to read them his tears again choked him, and he could not pronounce a word. The confessor asked him to give him the paper, that he might know the sins he had committed. He gave it to him. But as there arose in the priest's mind certain doubts about some things that were written there, he asked the permission of the penitent to go to the Father Abbot to obtain his advice.

This permission the penitent gave very willingly, and the confessor went to the Abbot with the paper in his hand.

Having unfolded it, he was surprised to find that there was no writing on it at all. "This is most strange," he said. "A few moments ago I read his whole Confession written on this paper."

They both examined the paper, and there was not the least mark or letter on it; it was pure and white. Then they knew that God had been pleased to show by this wonder that He had blotted out the sins from the man's soul, as He had blotted them from the paper they held in their hands.

PERFECT CONTRITION AND THE INTENTION TO CONFESS

Perfect Contrition has power to efface sin only if the intention is included to confess the sin. That the *votum confessionis* be made expressly and *explicite* in awakening perfect contrition, is, according to the opinion of St. Alphonsus, not required, and perfect contrition would lose its power of effacing mortal sin only then, if the sinner had the explicit intention *not* to confess his sin, but to content himself with an act of perfect contrition. The intention to confess the

sin does not have to include the intention to go to confession "as soon as possible." According to Lehmkuhl perfect contrition will efface the mortal sins even of a Christian who confesses only once a year, in compliance with the ecclesiastical precept, even though he may commit those sins almost a year before confession, but is resolved to confess these sins when going to confession next Easter time. Whether an early confession should not be *advised,* after mortal sin has been committed, is quite another matter.

—*The Casuist, Vol. III.*

INSINCERE SORROW

There was a certain man who did not lead a good life. While he was in good health he daily added sin to sin, and banished from his minds all thought of death and judgment.

But when he became ill, and saw that he was soon to die, he entered into himself and made a confession of his whole life. Then he received Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction with every outward mark of piety, and soon breathed his last. People were glad when they heard of how he had repented before his leath. But man sees only what happens outwardly; God beholds all that passes in man's heart. A few days after his death he appeared to a holy servant of God, and said to him: "Do not pray for me, for I am in hell."

"What!" exclaimed the holy man; "did you not confess your sins with sorrow? and did you not receive the last Sacraments with devotion?"

"It is true," replied the lost soul, "I did confess my sins, but I did not hate them as I ought to have done. I even thought that if I recovered I might with pleasure do them again. God does not pardon sins unless one hates them above all other evils. I did indeed hate and detest my sins with my lips, but not in my heart, and I was not forgiven. I am lost for ever."

SORROW MUST INCLUDE GOOD RESOLUTION

If we consider the nature of real sorrow for sin, it will not be difficult to see that if it *is* real, it must include the fixed resolution to avoid all mortal sin for the future. Moreover, if we wish to obtain forgiveness for venial sins also by means of this Sacrament, we must resolve to avoid those venial sins of which we accuse ourselves.

—*H. G. Hughes.*

He who strikes his breast and does not amend, confirms, but does not take away his sins.—*St. Augustine.*

We ought every day to renew our resolution, and excite ourselves to fervour, as if it were the first day of our conversion, and to say: Help me, O Lord God, in my good resolution, and in thy holy service, and give me grace how, this day, perfectly to begin, for what I have hitherto done is nothing.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

Now, if he that makes a strong resolution often fails, what will he do who seldom or but weakly resolves?—*Thomas à Kempis.*

If thy right eye scandalise thee, pluck it out and cast it from

thee. For it is expedient for thee that one of thy members should perish, rather than thy whole body be cast into hell.—Matt V, 29.

THE MEANS TO KEEP GOOD RESOLUTIONS

The God who inspires us with good resolutions gives us also the means to keep them. If we fail the fault is not His but ours. If we are in earnest, if our resolutions are not mere words, we will bend ourselves like men to the task and we will neglect no means of help. The man who resolves to warm himself does not keep away from the fire, the man who resolves to grow strong does not refrain from food and drink. Let us therefore surround our good resolutions to-day with all these aids. Plant your feet firmly upon the rock of your salvation which is Christ. Remember that He has promised to give whatsoever we ask in prayer never doubting. Fear not the tribunal of His mercy, the sacrament of forgiveness and consolation; but above all seek the strength of His Holy Table, the Bread of Life and the Chalice of Benediction for he that cometh thereto shall never hunger and he that drinketh thereof shall never thirst.

—P. C. Yorke.

What can be thought of those who immediately forget their good resolutions when they meet with obstacles. They may be compared to a boy who is sent by his parents on an errand and on his way meets a little dog that barks at him, and instead of attending to his errand runs back home. You can kill your conscience that bothers you the same as you can kill the bee that stings you, but, the same as the bee, the killed conscience will leave a sting.

—Albertus Magnus.

GOOD RESOLUTIONS NOT CARRIED OUT

Some people are full of the best resolutions, but never carry them out. They resemble the soldiers in a painting of a battle, who are in the attitude of striking the enemy, but never really strike.

—St. Theresa.

SELF REPREHENSION MUST BE CALM, NOT PASSIONATE

As the mild and affectionate reproofs of a father have far greater power to reclaim his child than rage and passion; so when we have committed any fault, if we reprehend our heart with mild and calm remonstrances, having more compassion for it than passion against it, sweetly encouraging it to amendment, the repentance it shall conceive by this means will sink much deeper, and penetrate it more effectually, than a fretful, injurious, and stormy repentance.

—St. Francis de Sales.

A Sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit: a contrite and humbled heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.—Ps. L, 19.

COMBAT THE PREDOMINANT PASSION

We should apply ourselves principally in prayer to combat the passion or evil inclination which is predominant in us; we should mortify it by continual vigilance, because when it is once destroyed we will easily obtain a victory over all the others.

—St. Vincent de Paul.

FAULTS TO BE CORRECTED ONE BY ONE

A monk, told by a young man that he had tried to correct all his faults, but without success, replied: "I am not surprised; take that bundle of sticks and break it in two." After one or two useless efforts, the young man replied it was impossible. "Truly," said the monk; "but untie it, separate the sticks and you'll be able to break them separately." So with your faults; attacked all at one time you can do nothing with them; take them one by one, and you'll succeed.

RISE AGAIN

A hermit, having fallen through human frailty into several faults, went to Silöe, one of the great Fathers of the Desert, to ask him what he should do. "My son," he answered, "you must rise again from your fall." "But, my father, I have already done so, and I have fallen again." "Well, just rise again once more." "And how often must I thus rise again?" "As often as you fall," replied the father. "Rise again always as long as you live, and when the hour of your death comes, it will find you either standing or lying down, and carry you in that position before the sovereign tribunal of God."

THE GAMBLER AND HIS DOG

A gambler, who often lost in a moment more than he gained in a week, usually had a dog with him. A friend met him one day without the dog, and wondered why that was. "Ah!" he replied, "the last time I brought him to the house I'm going to, he got so many kicks and blows that he has not forgotten them, and nothing will induce him to go there again." "Then your dog is wiser than his master," said the other, "who, so often duped there, returns again and again to the house!" A true image of the sinner, who, so often ruined in his soul in some occasion of sin, foolishly returns to that occasion.—*Mehler.*

USE SENSIBLE MEANS TO CONQUER A BAD HABIT

St. Bernard once begged a notorious sinner to refrain from sin for three days, and to live for that time at peace with God. The man thought that he surely could resist temptation for so short a period as three days; he exercised great self-control, and succeeded in not falling into his accustomed vice. After three days, St. Bernard besought him to live three more days without sin, for love of our Lady; and he was again successful. The Saint then urged him, as he said, for the last time, to lead a good life for three days in honour of all Saints. Before they were over, the man came to him, and promised that he would make his peace with God, not for a few days only, but for the rest of his life. The bad habit was conquered.

—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

RESTITUTION

Restitution is not a penance imposed by the confessor, but a strict obligation of justice, from which no confessor may dispense. "No sin," says St. Antoninus, "is more dangerous than the sin of injustice; to be forgiven other sins, we need only confess them with sincere sorrow and firm purpose to commit them no more; but there is no forgiveness of the sin of injustice without restitution; and with-

out it prayer and acts of penance are of no avail for salvation." Ill-gotten goods must, therefore, be restored, the damage done to our neighbour must be repaired, as far as lies in our power, otherwise God will not forgive us, for, says St. Augustine, "he who does not make the necessary restitution when he is able, does not perform but feigns or shams penance, because the sin is not remitted, unless the object taken be restored." He who has wronged his neighbour and will not, when he is able, indemnify him, cannot be forgiven by any confessor, nor by any bishop, nor by the Pope, nor even by God Himself. "God," says the learned and eloquent Bourdaloue, "has imparted to His ministers on earth an almost boundless power. They may dispense from the ecclesiastical laws, absolve from the heaviest censures, commute vows, free from oaths, forgive the most enormous sins, and open Heaven to the greatest sinners. But they are powerless to dispense from the obligation of restitution; nay, even God Himself does not claim this power. He who has committed an injustice and will not, though able, make restitution, cannot be forgiven by God Himself or be dispensed from this obligation by anyone but by the injured party. If he who refuses to make the necessary restitution were to go to confession and receive absolution, the absolution would be worthless and his confession would be a horrid sacrilege."

—*Ferreol Girardey, C. SS. R.*

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE DOES NOT EXCUSE FROM PRACTICING VIRTUE

As a Sacrament, Penance is a special, supernatural means whereby sinners are enabled to perform the work of reparation and the destruction of sin within them by graces poured into their souls through the superabundant merits of that precious Blood, one drop of which would have sufficed to obliterate the sin of all the world. The Sacrament, therefore, does not supersede virtue. The sinner must still, as the very nature of things demands, himself "do penance"; exercise, that is, penitential acts, the acts that are proper to the virtue of penance. But the Sacrament makes those acts easier; conveys supernatural help by which they are more readily produced, and, aiding our weakness, makes them efficacious for the regaining of spiritual life.—*H. G. Hughes.*

A PROTESTANT MINISTER'S OPINION OF THE CONFESSIONAL

As a minister of Jesus Christ, sinners will come to Him, weary and heavy laden, and His will be the joy of filling the hungry with good things. The joys and sorrows of the Good Shepherd should be the joys and sorrows of His under-shepherds. In the tribunal He will indeed weep with them that weep, but he will be a sharer of the joy of the angels. The Son of God hath power on earth to forgive sins, this is the legend written over every confessional.

C. M. Hall, in The Living Church, March 30, 1912.

A PROTESTANT MINISTER'S TRIBUTE TO THE WISDOM OF THE CHURCH

In the wide transepts of St. Peter's is a sight which cannot but arrest the attention of everyone who is sighing for Catholic Unity, and remind him of those days when every nation acknowledged the

same faith, and with one voice professed the same creed. There are arranged the boxes for the confessional, in every language. Not only are those of Europe to be seen inscribed over their places, but also its various dialects, and the strange tongues of the East. Thus, the wanderer from every land, who worships in these rites, beholds provision made for his spiritual wants. . . . He can unburden himself to a priest of his own land, and the consolations of his faith are doubly sweet when conveyed to him in the familiar words of his own tongue. . . . Catholic traits like this, none but the most prejudiced man can refuse to admire. They show the far-reaching wisdom of hat Church; and, overlooking the distinctions of climate and country, and recognizing her field of labour to extend wherever there is a degraded being to listen to her message, she is resolute to inherit the earth.—*William I. Kip*, in *Christmas Holy-days in Rome.*

INDULGENCES

The doctrine of Indulgences, so hard for an outsider to grasp, is intimately connected with the dogma of the Communion of Saints. We may have received the Sacrament of Penance, and have been forgiven our grievous sins, and the eternal punishment they deserved; but still there may remain a debt of temporal punishment which we must pay here or hereafter. The Church as the representative of Christ not only claims the power of pardoning sin, but of remitting part of all of the punishment it deserves. She goes to her spiritual treasury of the merits of Christ and His Saints, and when, cleansed of sin, we have manifested our good-will by our fasting, our prayers, or our alms-giving, she applies to us individually, according to our love, the merits which will free us partially or wholly from the debt of temporal punishment. How false to say that an indulgence is a permission to commit sin, when the first condition of gaining it is to be free from all grievous sin.

—*Bertrand L. Conway, C. S. P.*

All plenary Indulgences are of exactly the same value, but not all indulgences are plenary. Some are "partial," and we speak of a "seven years' Indulgence," a forty days' Indulgence," and so on. This does not mean that seven years or forty days are deducted from the time of punishment in Purgatory, but that the same amount of the temporal punishment is remitted, if a sinner gains that indulgence, as would have been remitted in the early days of the Church, if he had done public penance for that length of time.

In olden times a public penance of definite length was imposed in punishment for each sin. If a man took the Name of God in vain, he had to fast on bread and water for fifteen days. If he had sworn ten times, he had to fast for 150 days. If any one now swears ten times needlessly, then gets an Indulgence of 150 days, the whole of the temporal punishment, which would have been imposed upon him in the early Church, is remitted. The result of gaining several partial indulgences may be the same as that of a plenary Indulgence, for in both ways the remission of all the punishment due can be secured. We can get partial Indulgences

many times each day, and every Christian should try to gain as many as possible, since by means of them he can obtain remission of all or nearly all the temporal punishment that he deserves.

—*P. Hehel. S. J.*

EXTREME UNCTION

EXTREME UNCTION

That Extreme Unction possesses the true nature of a Sacrament will be clearly established, if we attend to the words in which the Apostle St. James has promulgated the law of this Sacrament: "Is any man," says he, "sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins they shall be forgiven him" (James v, 14, *sq.*). For when the Apostle affirms, "if he be in sins they shall be forgiven him," he thereby declares the nature and efficacy of the Sacrament. And that such has been the constant doctrine of the Catholic Church on Extreme Unction, several Councils testify; and the Council of Trent denounces anathema against all who presume to teach or think otherwise.

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

And they cast out many devils, and anointed with Oil many that were sick, and healed them.—Mark VI, 13.

St. Eleazar, after living more like an angel than a man, was on his deathbed and a terrible fear of death overwhelmed him. His face became distorted with horror, and he exclaimed: "O God, how fearful is the devil's power!" He received Extreme Unction, and at once recovered his previous serenity, and comforted the bystanders, saying: "By God's grace I have conquered."—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

HOLY ORDERS

HOLY ORDERS

Just before His Ascension, Christ gave the preaching power to His disciples. Moreover, He associated the preaching with the sacrifice and the remission of sins. "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day: And that penance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name, unto all nations beginning at Jerusalem."

—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

HOLY ORDERS AND MATRIMONY

Holy Orders and Matrimony come last in the list of sacramental rites, yet it is they that carry on the Kingdom of God. The fecundity of holy wedlock gives to the Church her faithful people; that of Holy Orders her devoted clergy.—*William Graham.*

When they had ordained to them Priests in every Church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord.

—*Acts* XIV, 22.

THE OFFICES OF THE PRIESTHOOD

The priesthood which we know in the Catholic Church to-day is derived from, and is a participation in, the priesthood of Christ. To understand therefore the nature of the Catholic priesthood we must ever recur to its exemplar, the priesthood of Christ. From that priesthood we learn of the threefold office: to offer sacrifice, to forgive sins, and to preach the revealed Word of God. The sublime truth which is realized in every Catholic priest to-day was first spoken of Christ Himself in the great Messianic psalm: "The Lord hath sworn and He will not repent: Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech."

The first office in the priesthood of Christ is to offer sacrifice. Theologians have differed as to what precisely constitutes a sacrifice. But all are agreed in this—that it is a rite by which men hold communion with God; by which God's supreme dominion over men is acknowledged; and by which those who have offended God are reconciled to Him. Now since all men had sinned in Adam there was imperative need of such a rite of reconciliation. Spiritual writers have speculated as to what might have happened if Adam had not sinned. Would there still have been place and necessity for sacrifice? Whatever be the answer to this question, certain it is that after the sin there was even greater need of sacrifice. We have "therefore a great High Priest, that hath passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God."—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent? I left thee in Crete that thou shouldst ordain Priests in every city as I also appoint thee.—*Tit.* I, 5.

Going therefore teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
—*Matt.* XXVIII, 19.

The lips of the Priests shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth: because he is the Angel of the Lord of Hosts.
—*Mal.* II, 7.

This, then, was the second great office of His priesthood, to apply the fruits of His sacrifice to our individual souls. By the great sacrifice the purchase value of our souls had been provided. There everything was ready for the satisfaction of eternal justice. But the merit had to be applied to each sinful soul. During Our Lord's life on earth, He exercised this power on many occasions. He healed the sick, and fed the hungry, and bestowed temporal gifts in abundance; but at the same time He used these events as opportunities of undoing sin. The paralytic came with his malady. Our Lord cured it; but at the same time He said: "Thy sins are forgiven thee."—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

One of the most important ceremonies in the ordination service is that which signifies this power. It is called the tradition of the instruments. A chalice with wine and water, and a paten with a

host are placed in the hands of the candidate while the Bishop says: "Receive power to offer sacrifice to God, to celebrate Mass both for the living and the dead." The Anglican church when it broke away from the Catholic Church abolished the rite of handing over the chalice and paten. And so when the question of the Anglican priesthood was tried in Rome, this wilful omission was declared to be a sign of change of intentions. By doing away with the signs of sacrifice itself, the Anglican church declared its intention of doing away with the priesthood.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

Obey your Prelates.—Heb. XIII, 17.

Let the Priests that rule well be esteemed worthy of double honour: especially they who labour in the Word and doctrine.
—I. *Tim.* V, 17.

He that heareth you, heareth Me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me. And he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me.—Luke X, 16.

He that is of God heareth the words of God. Therefore you hear them not, because you are not of God.—John VIII, 47.

ST. MARTIN AND THE EMPEROR

St. Martin, the illustrious Bishop of Tours, being on a visit at the court of the Emperor Maximus, was invited, with the priest who accompanied him, to sit down to dinner at the emperor's table. During the repast a cup of wine was poured out and presented to Maximus, who, wishing to do honour to the holy bishop, ordered it to be first handed to him, expecting that, when he had tasted, he would return it to him again. To his surprise, however, and that of the whole court, St. Martin, after he had drunk, passed the cup to his companion, the priest, as being the most exalted person in the assembly. So far from being displeased, Maximus applauded this action of the Saint, acknowledging that, in the sight of God, who estimates things at their true value, the imperial is far inferior to the priestly dignity.—*Butler.*

THE POWER TO FORGIVE SINS

It was only fitting then that Christ, when He left this earth, should invest His earthly priesthood with the same power of forgiving sins. Just as He had given them power over His natural Body, in the Blessed Sacrament, so now He gives them power over His mystical body, the Church. Their priesthood is the representation of His priesthood in Heaven. If a brother were to offend against a brother, the injured one must try kind words. If this did not avail he must seek for arbitration before two or three witnesses. Failing in this, he must have recourse to the Church. The Church is the continuation of Christ's work on earth. To His disciples He said: "Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth it shall be loosed also in Heaven."—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

A PROTESTANT ON CELIBACY

It has been represented as unnatural to compel men and women to live in the unmarried state, and as tending to produce propensities to which it is hardly proper even to allude. In the first place, the Catholic Church compels nobody to make such a vow. It only says that it will admit no one to be a priest, monk, friar or nun who rejects such a vow. St. Paul strongly recommends to all Christian teachers an unmarried life. The Church has founded a rule on this recommendation, and that, too, for the same reason that the recommendation was given, namely, that those who have flocks to watch over, or, in the language of our Protestant Church, who have the care of souls, should have as few as possible of other cares, and should by all means be free from those incessant and sometimes racking cares which are inseparable from a wife and family.—*Cobbett* (*Non-Cath.*) in *History of the Reformation.*

He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God.—But he that is with a wife is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided.—I. *Cor.* VII, 32-33.

THE SUSTENANCE DUE TO THE PRIEST

This right of the clergy is a right in the strict sense of the word. The sustenance which is due to them is due to them in strict justice. It is not an alms given out of charity. In this day of keen competition for a living there are of course plenty of opportunities where the charity of the faithful may come to the help of the clergy. There are many cases in which they may most fittingly receive help to which they have no right in strict justice. But these cases must be clearly marked off from that honourable sustenance which it is the strict duty of the laity to provide. In some countries this right and duty is emphasized by the fact that the funds for clergy sustenance are gathered in the form of taxes by government. In England and America, however, they are gathered in the form of what is known as "a collection." They are gathered in the same way as funds for charitable purposes. The amount is left largely to the judgment of the faithful themselves. Hence the feeling has grown up that the honourable sustenance of the clergy is a charity. This is a feeling which must be dispelled. The obligations of justice are on an entirely different footing from those of charity. The obligations of justice take precedence over the obligations of charity. The obligations of justice bind under grave inconvenience while those of charity do not. The duty, therefore, of subscribing toward the honourable sustenance of the clergy supposes a serious effort in those of limited means. It supposes an effort at least equal to that which is made to satisfy claims which have a more immediate sanction; the claims, for instance, of the landlord and the tradesman.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

PRIESTS HUMAN, THAT THEY MAY UNDERSTAND HUMAN BEINGS

The priests of the New Law are men, in order that they may condole with those who are in ignorance and error, because they too are compassed with infirmity. Had angels been your priests, my

brethren, they could not have condoled with you, sympathized with you, have had compassion on you, felt tenderly for you, and made allowances for you, as we can; they could not have been your patterns and guides, and have led you on from your old selves into a new life, as they can who come from the midst of you, who have been led on themselves as you are to be led, who know well your difficulties, who have had experience at least of your temptations, who know the strength of the flesh and the wiles of the devil, even though they have baffled them, who are already disposed to take your part, and be indulgent towards you, and can advise you most practically, and warn you most seasonably and prudently. Therefore did He send you men to be the ministers of reconciliation and intercession; as He Himself, though He could not sin, yet even He, by becoming man, took on Him, as far as was possible to God, man's burden of infirmity and trial in His own Person.—*Cardinal Newman.*

THE OFFICE DISTINCT FROM THE MAN

The Sacrament of Holy Orders does not remove human frailty in the one upon whom it is bestowed. The office of the priest is a sacred office and whatsoever the priest does in his official capacity he does validly as the minister of God. The judge in court may have his own private shortcomings, nevertheless the decisions he makes in his official capacity are valid and legal. We hear of lawyers who dishonestly appropriate funds entrusted to them, we hear of physicians committing criminal actions, but what sensible person would on this account pronounce all lawyers cheats, all physicians disreputable? The priesthood which imposes sterner duties than any other state of life, consists of human beings who individually may err. Does not Holy Writ say that even the just man falls seven times?

PRIESTS NOT FREE FROM SINS

What a strange, what a striking anomaly is this! All is perfect, all is heavenly, all is glorious, in the dispensation which Christ has vouchsafed us, except the persons of His ministers. He dwells on our altar Himself, the Most Holy, the Most High, in light inaccessible, and angels fall down before Him there; and out of visible substances and forms He chooses what is choicest to represent and to hold Him. The finest wheat-flour, and the purest wine, are taken as His outward symbols; the most sacred and majestic words minister to the sacrificial rite; altar and sanctuary are adorned decently or splendidly, as our means allow; and the priests perform their office in befitting vestments, lifting up chaste hearts and holy hands; yet those very priests, so set apart, so consecrated, they, with their girdle of celibacy and their maniple of sorrow, are sons of Adam, sons of sinners, of a fallen nature, which they have not put off, though it be renewed through grace, so that it is almost the definition of a priest that he has sins of his own to offer for.—*Cardinal Newman.*

ERRING MEMBERS OF THE PRIESTHOOD

Even among the small number of Apostles there was one who went wrong. God allowed Judas to be one of the Apostles, no doubt, to

warn us that even the election to the ministry will leave it to the free will of the individual whether or not he will lead a righteous life, and that there will be weak and faithless men even in the priesthood.

BORN FOR GREATER THINGS

St. Stanislaus Kostka was born of a noble family, and was brought up amidst the splendours and luxuries of his position. But even in his infancy he despised all these things, and when he grew up he took the resolution of renouncing them all, to embrace the holy poverty of the religious life. When his friends were informed of his design they tried to draw him from it. They often spoke to him of the happiness he would one day enjoy in the possession of great wealth. They pointed out to him the beauties of the vast domains of his ancestors, and the magnificence of the princely palace which would one day be his home. In a word, they placed before the eyes of his body as well as of his mind everything they thought would fascinate them. Stanislaus did indeed look at them, but he also looked higher still. "My friends," he said to them, "these things are very beautiful, but I was born for greater things. God, my Father in Heaven, made me to possess the eternal riches of Heaven, and to see Himself for ever there in His kingdom; therefore, I keep my eyes fixed on Heaven that I may not allow them to be captivated by earthly things, which are vile and worthless when compared with those of Paradise."

RESPECT FOR THE PRIESTHOOD

As St. Francis was one day conversing with some of his brethren on the respect due to priests, he said these words: "If I should happen to meet on the way an angel and a priest walking together I would salute the priest in the first place, and then the angel." And, seeing that some of them desired to know the reason of this, he added: "I would salute the priest in the first place because he is the representative of Jesus Christ Himself, whereas the angel, great as he is, is only His servant."

NON-CATHOLIC PRAISE OF CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES

The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the furthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustine; and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila.—*Macaulay.*

The American Israelite in a recent issue pays the following glowing tribute to our missionaries: "It must be said of the Roman Catholic Church that it always was able to inspire a considerable number of its priests with the spirit of self-sacrifice in mission service. We are reminded of this by the report of the death of the Jesuit priest, Isador Dupuy, who succumbed to leprosy in Madagascar, after having served as missionary in that country for seventeen years. He is the tenth priest stricken with that terrible malady within fifty years. Surely, there can be no stronger proof of devotion to a cause than the fact that the devotee is willing to face a danger or, one might

say, almost the certainty of death, and what is more, of a slow death, resulting from the most terrible malady in the catalogue of the afflictions of the human race."

RELIGIOUS ORDERS

One of the best hopes we have at the present day (and hopeful prospects are few) is in the number, and excellence, and fervour, of religious communities. Their condition has fluctuated at various epochs; but in these days they recall the fervour of the early Christians. While the world is sinking deeper into wickedness, while hostility to the name of Christ is growing more diabolically bitter day by day, while the agents of Satan have succeeded in many quarters in checking the religious life and look forward to extinguishing it, in other directions we see an extraordinary outburst of this life. Vocations abound, new openings are continually made, religious are in demand everywhere, they are ever extending their work, while they grow in fervoured devotedness. The religious state in its present development has attained a wonderful and unexampled position in the world and in the Church. So much so, that if all signs of Christian life perished elsewhere, the Orders of religious would alone suffice to vindicate the power of Christianity and the note of sanctity in the Church.—*Bishop Bellord.*

A PROTESTANT VIEW OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS

We are outliving the gross prejudices which once represented the life of the cloister as being from first to last a life of laziness and imposture; we know that, but for the monks, the light of liberty, and literature and science had been forever extinguished; and for six centuries there existed for the thoughtful, the gentle, the inquiring, the devout spirit, no peace, no security, no home but the cloister. There, learning trimmed her lamp; there, contemplation plumed her wings; there, the traditions of art were preserved from age to age by lonely, studious men, who kept alive in form and colour the idea of a beauty beyond that of earth—of a might beyond that of the spear and the shield—of a Divine sympathy with suffering humanity. To this we may add another and a stronger claim to our respect and moral sympathies. The protection and the better education given to women in these early communities; the venerable and distinguished rank assigned to them, when as governesses of their Order, they became in a manner dignitaries of the Church; the introduction of their beautiful and saintly effigies, clothed with all the insignia of sanctity and authority, into the decoration of places of worship and books of devotion, did more, perhaps, for the general cause of womanhood than all the boasted institutions of chivalry.

—*Mrs. Jameson* (*Non-Cath.*), in *Monastic Orders.*

THE WORK OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Statistics of the work of the religious Orders in Belgium show that they instructed in their schools, free of charge, 642,000 children, and took care of 44,856 patients; they fed and took care of 18,280 poor and incurables, 12,125 orphans, 8,222 insane, and in doing all this they saved the taxpayers annually 77,840,000 francs. What can the Social-

ists bring forward to compare with this record? To mention just one instance in comparison, it is stated that the city of Marseilles, where the Socialists have been instrumental in banishing the Catholic sisters, shows in one year a deficit of 1,340,437 francs in the hospital fund.

France is paying dearly for its expulsion of the religious Orders. Their absence has made it necessary to employ lay nurses in hospitals, and municipal administrations find the expense an almost unbearable burden. In Avignon and Toulouse, epidemics of typhoid and small-pox broke out recently, and the lay nurses refused to take such contagious cases. There was no choice but to send for sisters, who at once went to work among the patients suffering from these diseases. In Cherbourg, Annecy, and other places, the town council has invited sisters to again take charge of their hospitals, and this procedure had the support of the Freemasons and Socialists. It is worthy of note that the two chief antagonists of religious Orders, Combes and Clemenceau, insisted, when they took sick, on being attended by sisters.

Every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My Name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall possess Life Everlasting.
—*Matt.* XIX, 29.

MATRIMONY

MARRIAGE A SACRAMENT

From the fact that Christ raised the natural contract into a Sacrament, it follows that the parties to the contract are the ministers of the Sacrament. It is the man and woman who hand themselves over to each other, making a mutual contract to live together till death. It is the man and woman, therefore, who confer on each other the Sacrament, enabling them to fulfil the higher duties which are involved in the Christian married state. The priest is not the minister of the Sacrament, but only the witness to it. Our late Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII, emphasized this when he insisted that the contract and the Sacrament were not two separate things. "The distinction, or rather separation," he said, "can not be approved of; since it is clear that in Christian matrimony the contract is not separable from the Sacrament, and consequently that a true and lawful contract can not exist without being by that very fact a Sacrament."
—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

A good wife is a good portion, she shall be given in the portion of them that fear God, to a man for his good deeds.—Rich or poor, if his heart is good, his countenance shall be cheerful at all times.
—*Ecclus.* XXVI, 3-4.

From the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female.—For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother; and

shall cleave to his wife.—And they two shall be in one flesh.—Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh.—What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.—Mark X, 6-9.

MARRIAGE INSTITUTED ON ACCOUNT OF THE INSUFFICIENCY OF MAN

The very institution of marriage has its reason in the weakness and insufficiency of man. God, although supremely happy in the company of His own Blessed Trinity, had willed to exercise His love outside Himself. He had willed to produce a created world in which there should be one class of creatures bearing His own likeness. After separating the night from the day, and the land from the water, after making the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air and the cattle of the earth, He made man to rule the earth. He made man a reasonable being, capable of giving a reasonable service. But even with all the delights of that paradise of pleasure, with all his unimpaired intelligence and power of ordaining things for God's glory, man by himself was not enough for God's purpose. There were parts in God's great design which man by himself could not accomplish. He was wanting in both physical, mental and moral complements. So God said: "It is not good for man to be alone: let us make him a help like unto himself." So God cast Adam into a deep sleep, took a rib from his side from which He built a woman. And when God brought the woman to the man, then did Adam say: "This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man. Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh." Having been thus made for each other and united to each other, they then received the message of God as to the end for which all these things had been arranged. "Increase and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it."

—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

Wives, be subject to your husbands, as it behooveth in the Lord.—Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter towards them.

—*Col.* III, 18-19.

To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her husband:—And if she depart, that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife.—I. *Cor.* VII, 10-11.

THE BANNS

The purpose of the banns is to protect the honour and other interests of the Church and of the faithful. For it would disgrace the Church if one of her pastors would assist at a marriage forbidden by her laws; and it would be a sad misfortune for the two spouses, if, after they have been publicly married, it were then discovered that the contract was invalid, and they would have to separate from each other. Sometimes ill-instructed persons are ashamed of having their banns proclaimed. They should, on the contrary, be proud of it, for it means that the union is an honourable one, to which no objection is known.—*Charles Coppens, S. J.*

IMPEDIMENTS

For the protection of her children and of her Sacraments, the Church has established what we call impediments. These are of two kinds: the first kind renders the marriage null and void; the second renders the marriage unlawful. Of the former, which are the more numerous, some are absolute, preventing a person from contracting marriage with anyone, such as Holy Orders or a solemn vow; and some are relative, preventing marriage with certain persons, such as a first cousin. The Church's right to supplement the ordinary laws of nature with prohibitive and invalidating impediments needs no special defense, any more than the state does for its right to safeguard its citizens in the ordinary contract of business life. If you are about to purchase a piece of property you will naturally consult an attorney to see that your title is clear; if you desire to erect a building contractors and architects must be conferred with, that the specifications may be properly drawn up and honestly executed. And even if, unfortunately, a proper spirit of obedience and respect for the authority of your spiritual mother the Church would be lacking, personal interest for yourselves and your children must lead you to see your confessor or pastor and lay your circumstances before him, honestly and fully. This is the surest way of discovering if one or the other of these hindrances to marriage exists in your case. It is likewise the most certain way of learning how you are to act if such impediments are present. She who has power to make the law has also the power to abrogate it, or to dispense with it in particular cases. While the Church maintains these obstacles as wise and necessary protections, she realizes that there may, and often do, exist just and proper reasons for exemption from them. She, therefore, delegates to the bishop of the diocese the power to grant the required dispensation, if he, after a due examination of the case, thinks proper to do so. The Church, as our mother, tender and kind, will not refuse a fair demand, but she requires and expects that a true and exact statement of the case be made, and the proper reasons for the demand be advanced. This is most necessary, for a dispensation obtained under false pretenses would leave the marriage grievously sinful, and might render it null and void. It would be more serious and more foolish than for a man in Chicago who wishes to go to New York to ask for and take the train to San Francisco.—*J. W. Sullivan.*

MARITAL LOVE

Tigranes, King of Armenia, and his wife were once prisoners at the court of the great Persian King, Cyrus, who asked him what ransom he was prepared to pay for his wife. "My whole kingdom," answered Tigranes, "if it were still mine; but as it is not, I would gladly give my life to save her." Deeply moved by this answer, Cyrus set them both at liberty and restored their possessions. Some time after, Tigranes asked his wife what she thought of the Persian king's greatness and magnificence, and whether she had noticed the splendour of his court. She replied: "From the moment when we were taken prisoners, neither my eyes nor my thoughts were fixed on anything save on the man who was ready to ransom me with his

own life blood." She was a pagan, yet she puts many Christian wives to shame.—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

MIXED MARRIAGES

The Church has her eyes wide open to the weakness of human nature when she tolerates a mixed marriage. A mixed marriage is a real Sacrament, and all the graces of the Sacrament are capable of being conveyed through it, though these graces may often fail in their effects through the want of disposition in the non-Catholic party. The Catholic party may do his or her best, as the case may be, but as human nature is so weak, there is naturally an everpresent danger of the Catholic losing the Faith. Over and above the certainty of spoiling God's ideal there is the disadvantage of risking the loss of faith altogether. Therefore it is that the Church when she allows a mixed marriage, insists on the condition that the Catholic partner shall not be hindered in the practice of the Faith.—*Thomas J. Gerrard*

The foremost reason why the Church deprecates mixed marriages is because they spoil God's ideal. Christ came on earth to speak the mind of the Eternal Father. The Church exists to speak the mind of Christ. Any suggestion of difference of thought between the Father and the Son, or between Christ and His Church, carries with it the evident mark of its own absurdity. From this absurdity, however, we may gather something of the imperfection of a marriage union in which the parties profess different faiths. The Catholic Faith is the most precious treasure, the most illustrious adornment which a man can possess. It is a possession, moreover, which is unique of its kind. It can not combine or make terms with any other faith. If one article be changed only in the slightest degree the whole faith is rendered vain. A marriage union, therefore, in which one party makes profession of Catholicism and the other of Protestantism can not be but an ungraceful thing in the eyes of God.

—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

DIVORCED PERSONS

Commenting upon the statement made by Bishop Kennedy, rector of the American College, Rome, that he, as the intermediary between American visitors and the Pope, would never arrange an audience for any divorced person, the *Brooklyn Eagle* remarked: "The Pope is absolutely consistent in refusing to receive Americans or others who are immoral persons from the Church's viewpoint. This consistency is a quality which non-Catholics can recognize and admire. Most communicants of various Protestant bodies are not too well satisfied with the tolerance of divorce and the re-marriage by clergymen of divorced persons. Many such communicants are already doubting whether, on the whole, *the Roman Catholic view is not the correct one on this subject.*"

Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her.—Mark. X, 11.

Whilst her husband liveth she shall be called an adulteress if she be with another man.—Rom. VII, 3.

COMPANY KEEPING

That was the naïve answer given by the little Irish girl. Asked by the priest what was the way of preparing for the Sacrament of Matrimony, she replied: "A little courting, your reverence." The truth thereby unconsciously spoken needs to be well spread abroad in these days. Courting time is a preparation for a great Sacrament. In speaking of this, even as of all other phases of Christian life, there is need of much common sense. On the one hand the young people who have arrived at this interesting stage may be expected to take it seriously, but on the other hand they must not be expected to deport themselves as if they were preparing for a funeral. Company keeping is one of the happiest times of life, and if it is not attended with joy and brightness there is something wrong somewhere. At the outset then let it be known to all parents that there is nothing sinful in their grown up children looking for partners. Let it be known to all nuns that there is nothing wrong in big children of Mary speaking to the young men of the congregation. Let it be known to all young men and all young maidens that the affairs of courtship is not something to be ashamed of. Of its nature it involves a certain amount of modesty and shyness. Still from its earliest signs and movements it is something which ought to be perfectly above board, known to father and mother, acknowledged in the presence of the family. It is a preparation for a great Sacrament, and its verve and joy and delight can suffer no loss through being regulated by the claims of religion.

—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

ADVICE ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

At the marriage of Cana, Jesus and Mary were personally present, so I hope that at your nuptials they will be present also, though invisibly, to give you their blessing. I feel assured that the modesty of the two persons principally concerned, no less than that of the guests, will be on that day exemplary, every one bearing in mind that the Son of God chose to ennoble the conjugal state by raising it to the Divine excellence of a Sacrament; calling to mind also that in the espousals of Christians the Church recognizes her own espousals with Jesus. At table, amid the common mirth, let each one from time to time reflect that He who in the beginning instituted marriage is through His immensity there present, and that all must give to Him a strict account of every word uttered and of even the most minute act which may not be according to His most holy law. In this way only will the day of your marriage be one of real gladness, for it is only when you are pleasing God that you can be truly joyous. In sin no one can ever find peace of soul or true happiness.—*Blessed Sebastian.*

LARGE FAMILIES

A large family is a means of developing character, both in the parents and in the children. In the case of the father, it is a question as to whether he will face the task of working and saving for the means of bringing up a large family. He certainly needs courage. He certainly needs self-denial and self-restraint. A large family is a means of strengthening both the temporal and the eternal

interests of the family. Even from a worldly point of view a father is working against his own interests in setting limits to his family from motives of economical selfishness. His view must be a broad one, however. The law of nature pervades the organization of society even as it does the organization of the physical universe, and none the less does it there reflect the mind of God. It is, therefore, both the law of nature and the law of God that children should support their parents in sickness and old age. When, however, there is only one child or two, and these have wives and families of their own to support, there is little opportunity of supporting aged parents. But where the burden is divided, among say seven or eight families, then the aged couple have some hope of ending their days in reasonable and frugal comfort. In the case of the children it is a question of generosity or selfishness. Who has not looked with dismay on the spoilt child, the only one of the family? Who has not observed the ugly self-consciousness, pride and vanity of two children, the miserable two who have had no other companions but each other during the years when the foundation of their character was laid? And who has not seen the beautiful unselfishness and generosity of the children of a family of seven, or better still of a family of fourteen? Why even their faults and their sins are due to excess of generosity rather than to defect in it.

—Thomas J. Gerrard.

Many children are a blessing to the family. They provide the opportunity for the exercise of one of the strongest instincts of nature, family affection, the love of parents toward children, of children toward parents, of children toward each other.

—Thomas J. Gerrard.

Give not to son or wife, brother or friend, power over thee while thou livest, and give not thy estate to another: lest thou repent and thou entreat for the same.—As long as thou livest, and hast breath in thee, let no man change thee.—For it is better that thy children should ask of thee, than that thou look toward the hands of thy children.—Ecclus. XXXIII, 20-22.

PARENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILDREN

In Lacedemon a parent, as being the cause of all the irregularities of his children, was justly punished for their crimes with greater severity than the children themselves.—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

THE LIMITS OF PARENTAL AUTHORITY

The parents are only supposed to be carrying out the work of God. If, therefore, any of their commandments are manifestly contrary to the law of God, then the parents have gone beyond the limits of their jurisdiction. In such cases it is not only lawful but of obligation to lay aside the command of the parent. Such a course of action is not disobedience, but rather obedience to a higher law. But notice that this is only allowable when the thing commanded is *manifestly* against the law of God. If there is any doubt the presumption is always in favor of the parent; for a wayward child

might easily persuade itself that it was following out God's will, while it was in reality only following out its own perverse will. Conscience certainly is supreme, but there is need to guard against a false conscience, and the only practical rule is to obey the parent in case of doubt.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

THE VOCATION OF CHILDREN AND THE AUTHORITY OF PARENTS

Among the several kinds of cases in which the rights of God, the rights of parents and the rights of children seem to clash, there are two which are constantly arising, and concerning which the Church has made definite arrangements. The question concerns the choice of a state of life. Is the child bound to obey its parents in choosing whether to get married or to become a priest or a religious?

We are here dealing with what is called a vocation. Now a vocation is a call from God. It is known by certain signs which are recognized by the Church and with which spiritual directors are well acquainted. If, therefore, those signs are present, if the vocation is sufficiently manifest, then clearly the child is perfectly justified in obeying the call of God and in setting aside the command of the parent who interferes with the call of God. And the principle works both ways. If the child is called to any given state of life, then it is wrong for the parent to interfere with that call. If, on the other hand, the child is not called to a given state, then it is wrong for the parent to urge the child, either directly or indirectly, to enter that state. Whether the case be one of entering upon matrimony, or the priesthood, or religion, God's call goes before the wishes of a parent.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

THE GOOD MOTHER

Mrs. Vianney, the mother of the venerable Curé of Ars, always kept before her mind that her children belonged to God more than to herself, and that they were all His children; hence she taught them from their very infancy how to love and serve Him, their Heavenly Father. Every morning she herself went to the room where they slept to awaken them, that she might see that they offered their hearts to God, and be sure that the first thought and the first action of the day were to Him. "You were very happy," said one of his friends to the Blessed Curé of Ars, in after-years, "to have had so early a love of prayer." He answered: "After God, it was the work of my dear mother; she was so good. Virtue passes from the heart of a mother to the heart of her children, who do willingly what they see her do."

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A MOTHER

And if great be the responsibility of the father as head of the family, greater still, if possible, is the responsibility of the mother as his coadjutor. With her begins the life of the child; and the first grave duty that devolves upon her is to safeguard the life and natural perfection of her offspring—a duty rendered more grave, because upon it depends also the spiritual life of the child. The father is indeed head of the family, but the mother's care and love seem to be more far-reaching; so much so, that God, speaking by

the mouth of Isaias of His eternal love for His Church, referred to it under the image of a mother's love for her children(Isa. xlix, 15). Hence the Abbot Rupert, in his reflection on the pathetic case of the prodigal son, concludes that, had that wayward young man had a mother living, he would never had gone away from his father's house, or, at least, he would have returned with greater confidence of being pardoned. What can be more beautiful than the example given by the holy Monica, mother of the great St. Augustine?

—J. A. M. Gillis.

EDUCATION

Education, in the best sense of the word, is the formation of habits. The formation of good habits is good education. The formation of bad habits is bad education. Education is not merely the acquisition of knowledge. The necessity of examination, especially competitive examinations, is largely responsible for the impression which identifies erudition and education. Mere erudition, however, is only a small part of education. It pertains to the faculty of memory. Now, the memory must be trained, but not only the memory. All the powers of the child must be brought out to the highest perfection possible. Its intellect must be trained to perceive the truth. Its senses, internal and external, must be trained to perceive what is beautiful. And, above all, its will must be trained to do what is good. Moreover, since the soul, while in this life, depends on the body for its due operation, the body also must be so trained as to keep in a healthy condition. "A sound mind in a sound body" is an axiom as old as the hills. A training in the fundamental laws of hygiene, therefore, is ministrant to the training of the child's intellectual, aesthetical, and moral faculties.

—Thomas J. Gerrard.

PROPER TRAINING OF CHILDREN

If parents, mothers in particular, knew how to train their children from the cradle for God; if, instead of fondling their infant humours and caressing their very passions and caprices, they turned the first dawn of their reason to the knowledge and consideration of the Divine goodness, and shaped their lips to utter as first sounds the two sweetest names in human speech, "Jesus and Mary," many who now have to weep over the follies and vices of their offspring might be thanking God instead, for having blessed their family with a Saint.

—Cardinal Wiseman.

The deeper the roots of virtue strike into the soil of the family, and the more alert parents are, by word and deed, to inform the souls of the young with the precepts of religion, the more plentiful are the fruits resulting to the good of society in general. It is of the highest importance, therefore, not merely that domestic society should be constituted holily, but as well that it should be governed by holy rules; and that a religious spirit and a Christian life should be diligently and constantly nourished in it. Therefore it was that the merciful God, when He had decreed to perfect the work of Redemption which the ages had so long awaited, so ordered the work that its first beginnings

should exhibit an august model of a family Divinely constituted, in which all men might see an exemplar of every virtue and holiness. Such a family was that at Nazareth, in which the Sun of Justice, ere He should shine with full radiance on all the nations, was first hidden; and this family comprised Christ, the Lord God, together with His Virgin Mother, and her most holy spouse Joseph, who was to be the foster-father of Jesus . . . And so all fathers may see in Joseph a splendid norm of parental watchfulness and care; mothers may perceive in the most holy Mother of God an admirable illustration of love, modesty, obedience and perfect faithfulness; and children have in Jesus, who "was subject to them," a Divine model of obedience which they should admire, worship, and imitate.—*Leo XIII.*

The children of sinners become children of abominations, and they that converse near the houses of the ungodly.—The inheritance of the children of sinners shall perish, and with their posterity shall be a perpetual reproach.—The children will complain of an ungodly father, because for his sake they are in reproach.—*Ecclus.* XLI, 8, 10.

EARLY IMPRESSIONS

The early impressions of our lives have much to do in moulding thought in future years. We can never rid ourselves of the influences of our earliest childhood. We love to go back to the old home; to sleep under the same roof where we heard the rain patter years and years ago; we love to pick fruit from the old orchard; we love to sit on the same rock that years ago was familiar to us, and to fish in the same stream where we fished when we were young. All this, because somehow, early impressions have set their seal upon us, and we cannot, if we would, put them away. By a law of our own being these impressions come back, and even in old age the cycle returns and there is the second childhood. The Norse Viking, who, as a boy, tended goats on his native hills, grows strong, sails the seas, and grows rich. He builds himself at last a palace on the Bosphorus amid flowers and southern scenes, but when old age comes on all these fade out of his recollection, and the only sound he hears is the bleating of the kids on the Norway hillsides. If, then, early impressions linger so long, how important that early influences should be of the right sort!

EXAMPLE THE BEST TEACHER

There was once a father whose life was far from being so edifying as it ought to have been. He had a large family, and although he himself had but little piety, his greatest desire was to see his children virtuous and good. So he one day asked a friend, whom he much esteemed for his wisdom and experience, what he would consider the best means of attaining this object. He answered him: "I know only of one; and that is, to set them a good example. Children often forget what is said to them, but for the most part they willingly do what they see their parents doing."

EDUCATION WITHOUT RELIGION

A system of education in which religion is left out, is like a building without foundations, or an arch without a keystone; it has no

unity of purpose, and its various elements have no principle of cohesion. It is not true in any part, because it is made up of a number of partial truths, which are practically the worst kind of falsehoods. As there is no branch of knowledge which does not naturally lead to the knowledge of God, which does not reflect some ray of the Divine glory, so there is none which can be separated from its Divine origin without becoming dead and dark and meaningless.

—*A. B. Sharpe.*

The movement of the Roman Catholics to secure a system of education which shall not ignore religion is a movement in the right direction.—*The Times (New York), March* 1, 1910.

KNOWLEDGE

Because a thing is good, it does not follow that it is good for all men, at all times, or in unlimited abundance. Weapons are necessary, but it is not well that they should be generally in the hands even of men who are sane and temperate. Again, all men are not adapted for self-government and complete liberty; in certain stages of developing civilization these grand powers would bring confusion and destruction. Knowledge, also, if too little or too much, if not guided by moral principle, may become useless, or misleading, or even a positive curse.—*Bishop Bellord.*

KNOWLEDGE LIKELY TO BE MISUSED

Intellectual advancement is a duty that we owe to God and to society; in that consists a considerable part of the work imposed on mankind; it is one of the highest goods in our powers; but, like all other things, it is liable to misuse, and may become an instrument of immense evil. A due proportion must be observed between all the constituent elements of human nature, and therefore moral cultivation should go hand in hand with the intellectual. If this be neglected, the most injurious consequences are to be feared. In God, who is the rule of human perfection, power and goodness are equal, for each is infinite. The extreme example of intellectual power without rectitude is Satan, the opposite of God.—*Bishop Bellord.*

MORAL TRAINING

The most direct road to personal advantage is generally the road of dishonesty and violence; and there is nothing to keep a selfish man from following it but that moral training which is so completely neglected at this day. Education helps a man to secure the object of his desires, whatever it be. Moral training is required to prevent him from desiring an unworthy object, or seeking it by unlawful means.—*Bishop Bellord.*

RELIGIOUS TRAINING

Vice-President Marshall (Non-Cath.), addressing the pupils of a Catholic college in Indiana, said: "In my opinion no man is educated for citizenship until trained in body and mind and heart to reverence the omnipotent God. He must know that God reigns and that Jesus Christ is the Supreme Ruler of mankind. In our day there are too many men losing their moorings. There are too many who forget

that it is the unseen things—the things that are God's—that weigh. In your educational institutions you keep these truths before the mind of youth, and, holding the opinions which I hold, why should I not feel proud to participate in the joys of this dedication?"

THE FOUR R'S

Teach your children the three R's, and leave out the great R of religion, and you will only produce a fourth R, rascaldom, and get a nation of clever devils.—*The Duke of Wellington* (*Non-Cath.*).

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND EDUCATION

Father Noll, in his compilation, *"For Our Non-Catholic Friends: The Fairest Argument,"* gives a list of the great universities founded prior to the Reformation, and observes that "the number of students attending the different universities before the sixteenth century greatly exceeds the number enrolled in any of our big schools to-day. . . . . Even now, 'illiterate' Spain has more students pursuing a university course than England has."

Education is in reality not only not repressed, but is encouraged by the Catholic Church, and is a mighty instrument in its hands, and ably used. In every street in Rome, for instance, there are, at short distances, public primary schools for the education of the children of the lower and middle classes in the neighbourhood. Rome, with a population of 158,678 souls, has 372 public primary schools, with 482 teachers, and 14,099 children attending them. Has Edinburgh so many public schools for the education of these classes? I doubt it. Berlin, compared with Rome, has only 264 schools. . . . The statistical fact, that Rome has above a hundred schools more than Berlin, for a population little more than half that of Berlin, puts to flight a world of humbug about systems of national education carried on by governments, and their effects on society.

—*Samuel Laing* (*Non-Cath.*), in *Notes of a Traveler.*

A PROTESTANT MINISTER ON PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

There is a special need for Church schools for coloured persons in the South, schools which will be really efficient. . . . The wonderful success of Roman Catholic parochial schools and academies gives us the assurance that the like or similar schools will produce good results for us. These would meet a peculiar need of the Church among coloured people.

—*G. G. Walker,* in *The Living Church, Sept.* 13, 1913.

A PROTESTANT MINISTER ON MONASTERIES AND EDUCATION

Canon Farrar asks his readers to "consider what the Church did for education. Her ten thousand monasteries kept alive and transmitted that torch of learning which otherwise would have been extinguished long since. A religious education, incomparably superior to the mere athleticism of the noble's hall, was extended to the meanest serf who wished it. This fact alone, by proclaiming the dignity of the individual, elevated the entire hopes and destiny of the race."

—*Hulsean Lectures,* 1870, *Christianity and Race.*

OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS

An old man some time ago told the following story about himself: One evening in the summer-time as I was returning home after a hard day's work in the hayfield, tired and hungry, I met my father on the road to town. He said to me: "I wish you would take this parcel to the village for me, James." I was at that time a boy of twelve and, like other boys of my own age, I was more fond of play than of work. I was vexed that he should ask me to go to the village after my day's work, for it was about two miles distant. But I loved my father, and I showed my love for him by always obeying him at once; so I at once amiiably said: "Yes, father, I will go." "Thank you, James, my boy," he said; "I was going myself, but, somehow, I don't feel very well to-day. You have always been a good son to me, James." I hurried into the town, and was soon back again. When I came near the house, I saw a crowd of people at the door. One of them came to me, the tears rolling down his face. "Your father," he said, "fell dead just as he was entering the house; the last words he spoke were to you." I am an old man now, but I have thanked God over and over again in all the years that have passed since that hour that these last words were: "You have always been a good son to me, James."

My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:—That grace may be added to thy head, and a chain of gold to thy neck.—Prov. I, 8-9.

Thou shalt honour thy mother all the days of her life.—Tob. IV, 3.

Children, hear the judgment of your father, and so do that you may be saved:—For God hath made the father honourable to the children: and seeking the judgment of the mothers, hath confirmed it upon the children.—Ecclus. III, 2-3.

Son, support the old age of thy father, and grieve him not in his life:—And if his understanding fail, have patience with him, and despise him not when thou art in thy strength: for the relieving of the father shall not be forgotten.—For good shall be repaid to thee for the sin of thy mother,—And in justice thou shalt be built up, and in the day of affliction thou shalt be remembered and thy sins shall melt away as the ice in the fair warm weather.—Ecclus. III, 14-17.

My son, forget not My law, and let thy heart keep My commandments.—For they shall add to thee length of days, and years of life and peace.—Prov. III, 1-2.

BLESSED THOMAS MORE'S RESPECT FOR HIS FATHER

Blessed Thomas More (who was Chancellor of England, and died on account of his firmness in supporting the Catholic religion) entertained such high respect for his parents that he never left his house, even in the days of his power and great influence, without having first demanded, on his knees, the blessing of his aged father.

THE DEBT CHILDREN OWE TO PARENTS

There was once an industrious cabinet maker, who seemed to be amassing not a little wealth. One day, a neighbour asked him what he did with all his money. He replied: "With part I pay my debts, while I put the rest out on interest." The other asked him to explain what he meant. He answered with a smile: "I mean just what I say. I give back to my aged parents the money they have spent on me—that is my debt—and what I now spend on my children, I look upon as capital which I hope to get repaid with interest when I am old." Are not the words of this man but too true? What our parents do for us is a debt which we are bound at some time of our lives to repay.—*Frederick Reuter.*

A SON'S PRAYERS CONVERTED HIS PARENTS

I know of a young boy, who, on his First Communion day, felt a tinge of sadness because his parents neglected holy Mass on Sundays. He had often begged them to go, but all in vain. Now, however, he made up his mind to pray unceasingly for them. On two mornings of every week he attended Mass, offering it for his parents' conversion. Soon his mother noticed that he went out regularly at an early hour. Determined to learn what her boy was doing, she followed him one day, and, entering the church, saw him kneeling before the altar, praying with the greatest fervour. Patiently she waited, till the *Ite missa est* of the priest, which she had not heard for years, told her the Mass was finished. Tears were in the boy's eyes as he left the church, but what was his surprise when he found his mother waiting for him at the door. When she asked him what was the cause of his sorrow, he threw his arms around her and said: "Yesterday it was for father, and to-day, mother, it was for you." The results of the boy's fervent prayer and self-sacrifice was that God touched these two hearts with His grace, so that the following Sunday father and mother accompanied their devoted son to Mass.—*Frederick Reuter.*

THE DUTY WE OWE TO PARENTS AND SUPERIORS

In these days there is a strong tendency among men to exaggerate their rights, and to undervalue the rights of their superiors. In the family and in the state and in religion there is a strong force of opposition to law. It is well, then, for children to realize early the dignity of dutifulness to parents, spiritual pastors and temporal masters. From a merely natural point of view such dutifulness can only lead to the good of the children. But from a supernatural point of view the thought is noble in the highest degree. We see that in serving our parents and those in authority for the sake of God, we are serving our own best interests; for we are thereby doing our best to place ourselves in that adjustment of the universe which God has ordained as the most perfect.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

BE KIND TO YOUR MOTHER

Frederick, King of Prussia, one day rang for his page, and, no one answering, he opened the door and found the page fast asleep in his chair. He was about to waken him, when he perceived a letter

hanging out of his pocket. Suspecting that the boy's fatigue might be due to dissipation, he took it out and read it. It was a letter from the young man's mother, in which she thanked him for having sent her part of his money to relieve her poverty, and telling him that God would reward him for his filial affection. The king, after reading it, took out a purse full of money, and slipped it, along with the letter, into the page's pocket. Returning to his chamber, he rang the bell so loudly that it awoke the page, who instantly made his appearance. "You have had a sound sleep," said the king. The page was at a loss how to excuse himself, and putting his hand into his pocket by chance, to his utter astonishment found there the purse. He took it out, and turned pale when he saw what it was. "What is that?" said the king; "what is the matter?" "Ah, sire," said the young man, throwing himself on his knees, "some one is trying to ruin me. I know nothing of this money that I have just found in my pocket, nor do I know how it has been put there." "My young friend," said Frederick, "God often does great things for us even in our sleep. Send that to your mother, salute her on my part, and assure her that I will take care of both her and you."—*Ave Maria.*

POPE BENEDICT XI. AND HIS MOTHER

Pope Benedict XI. was the son of an humble shepherd. When he was raised to the pontifical throne, his mother came to visit him, and the whole city went out to meet her, in honour of her son, the Pope. The good woman was magnificently dressed, in clothing far above her humble condition in life, and looked more like a princess than the wife of a poor shepherd. When she was introduced into the presence of the Pope, he looked at her, and, without showing any sign of recognition, said: "That lady cannot be my mother; my mother was too poor to purchase such a magnificent costume."

The poor woman was obliged to go out without even speaking to the Pope. She laid aside her rich robes, put on the humble dress belonging to her lowly station, and again appeared before him. No sooner had she entered than the Pope, at once rising from his throne, left his Cardinals and went to meet her. When he drew near to her, he threw his arms around her and wept, as he said: "Ah, this is my mother now! There is no one in the world who could love his mother as much as I do mine."

SACRAMENTALS

THE SACRAMENTALS, WHAT THEY ARE

All sensible rites instituted by the Church to produce salutary effects, as also all objects blessed by the Church for the same purpose, may be classed as sacramentals. They differ from the Sacraments, first, in that they are instituted by the Church, while the Sacraments are of Divine institution. They differ from the Sacraments, in the second place, both as to the effect which they produce and as to the way in which they produce it. The Sacraments confer sanctifying grace directly, and by virtue of the act done; that is, by a virtue inherent in them from the institution of Christ and the

agency of the Holy Spirit, who uses them for our sanctification. The sacramentals, on the other hand, never confer sanctifying grace directly and by virtue of the act done, but only indirectly and by virtue of the prayer and blessing of the Church coöperating with the faith and piety of the person who uses them. The Sacraments are channels through which sanctifying grace flows, as it were, into the soul; the sacramentals are but means by which the soul is aided and disposed to receive sanctifying grace, either through the Sacraments, or directly from God. Thus, what are called the ceremonies of Baptism dispose the person to be baptized to receive sanctifying grace through the Sacrament, and the sprinkling oneself with holy water, in a penitent spirit, disposes one to receive from God the forgiveness of venial sins.

But while the sacramentals never directly confer sanctifying grace, they may be, and ordinarily are, a direct means of actual grace. Actual grace is given with a view to enable those who are in sin to be freed from sin, or, again, to enable those who are in grace "by good works to make" their "calling and election sure." It is thus given to sinner and to Saint alike, whereas no sinner as such, that is to say, no one who is in mortal sin, and does not repent, ever receives or ever can receive sanctifying grace. It is by actual grace that men are freed from the power of the devil, and certainly the exorcisms of the Church, which rank as sacramentals, are a direct means of freeing men from his power. It is an actual grace to be strengthened against temptation, and there is no doubt that the Sign of the Cross, made in the spirit of faith and piety, or the wearing of a scapular or other object blessed by the Church, gives strength against temptation Once more, every good inspiration is an actual grace. Who does not know that the Crucifix and holy images are the sources of good inspirations without number? True, actual grace is not tied to the sacramentals. But they are a fruitful means of obtaining actual graces, and are such not merely by reason of the piety of those who use them, but primarily because of the institution, and prayer, and blessing of the Church.—*Bishop A. MacDonald.*

The sacramentals are not channels of grace in the same sense that the Sacraments are. A sacramental is an external sign which is the occasion of God's grace. But it is not a piece of magic. Usually the ceremony is from its very nature fitted to induce the proper dispositions of grace. The taking of holy water signifies washing, and thus is an apt ceremony to help the Christian to keep a clean mind and heart. The making of the Sign of the Cross is an apt ceremony by reason of its association with the Cross of Christ. Moreover, the sacramentals have the approval and blessing of the Church. They are of countless variety. Every Catholic is not supposed to avail himself of all of them. He chooses what suits his temperament and particular needs. There is no temperament so spiritualized as to have no need of sacramentals. Every good Catholic, therefore, will be on his guard against neglecting them. He will also be careful not to speak deprecatingly of fellow-Catholics who use sacramentals which he does not use. Also, he will hesitate to force upon others unduly those sacramentals which he has chosen for himself. The reason of

them all is to promote intercourse with the spiritual world. In so far as they serve this end they must be used.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

"Such is the power of the Sign of the Cross," says Origen, "that if we place it before our eyes, neither concupiscence, nor voluptuousness, nor anger can resist it; at its appearance the whole army of the flesh and of sin takes to flight," and St. Cyril, of Jerusalem, another of the Fathers of the Church, calls it "A benefit from God, the standard of the faithful, the terror of demons." Let us make the Sign of the Cross bravely and courageously. Again, says St. Cyril: "When the demons see it they are reminded of the Crucified: they fly: they hide themselves and leave us."

One day some of the religious who had placed themselves under the guidance of St. Benedict, and who had fallen away from their first fervour, resolved among themselves, through envy, to bring about his death secretly by poison, because he desired to make them return to the strict observance of the monastic rule, and because his life was a constant rebuke to their sinful negligence. When the hour of dinner arrived, they placed before him a glass of wine into which they had infused the deadly poison. St. Benedict, according to his custom, made over it the Sign of the Cross previous to his partaking of it. At the same moment the glass in his hand broke into fragments. It was in this way God made known to him the evil designs of those impious men, and delivered him from the death to which their envy had condemned him.

APOSTOLIC ORIGIN OF THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

Nicephorus writes that St. John the Evangelist made upon himself the Sign of the Cross before dying. Hilduin, says St. Paul, used the same sign to restore sight to a blind man. Many even affirm that Our Lord Himself taught this sign to the Apostles, and that He used it to bless them on the day of His Ascension. The Sign of the Cross, says St. Ignatius, disciple of St. John, is the trophy raised against the power of the prince of this world: when he sees it, he is afraid: when he even hears of it, he is filled with terror. —*Hauterive.*

THE PASSWORD

General Smith, of the army of the South, was coming in with his men too late to know the password. Knowing that if he went forward he would receive the fire of his own side, he presented himself before his men, and asked if any one would sacrifice his life to save the rest. A soldier stood out of the ranks. After explaining the certain danger he would have to face, the General gave him a piece of paper, on which were written these words: "Send me the password. Genl. Smith." He knew the soldier would be shot, and then searched, and thus the paper would be found and read and the sign made known. The soldier sets out and reaches the outposts: "Who goes there?" "A friend." "The word or sign?" But the soldier advances without reply, and at once the rifles are all raised and pointed at him. He thereupon makes on himself the Sign of the

Cross, and to his surprise the rifles are lowered. The act of the Catholic soldier, in commending himself to God, was the very sign the Catholic commander had that very morning given to the army.
—*Toulemont.*

CEREMONIES; LITURGY

CEREMONIES REQUIRED BY HUMAN NATURE

The fact that all nations offered external worship by ceremonial practices, sacrificial rites and religious observances, that the Jewish religion in this respect was a counterpart of the efforts of the neighbouring peoples to honour God, serves to illustrate the point, even without the occurrence of similiar phenomena among us in human affairs. Take our national holiday, for instance, when patriotism is proclaimed under the most elaborate forms. Why? Because it is natural. When membership into a society is conferred on an individual, why is solemnity added to the event by mystic signs, rites and ceremonies? These latter might be dispensed with; and they would be, if human nature were different from what it is. We have our inauguration celebrations, conducted with no less pomp and magnificence that the most elaborate religious services. And no people ever honoured its magistrates without giving visible testimony, by something more than words, of its consideration and respect.
—*John H. Stapleton.*

MAN LED BY THINGS CORPOREAL TO THINGS SPIRITUAL

St. Thomas of Aquin teaches this truth when he says, "that it is of the nature of man to be led by things corporeal and sense-perceptible to things spiritual and intelligible" (III. Q. lxi, a. 1). According to this, Divine Providence provides for everything in accordance with nature, and it follows that it is in harmony with the fitness of things that God should provide means of salvation for men in the form of corporeal things, or by means of external signs. In this is constituted the sacramental system of the New Law.

EXTERNALS DRAWING TOWARD SIN COUNTERACTED BY EXTERNALS IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION

The senses and the external world are so liable to draw toward sin that they must be counteracted by external allurements in the opposite direction. Therefore, God ordains a number of external rites and ceremonies all calculated to give to man a stable equilibrium in the way of grace. God ordains fasting not because He wants the offering of a bit of bread, but because He wants that strong act of love which is fostered by abstinence from bread. The external acts exist only for the sake of the internal acts. But simply because man is made of body and spirit his internal spiritual life can only be maintained by a corresponding life of external religion.
—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

THE RIGHT USE OF EXTERNALS

We can not deny that there is a tendency in all of us to forget the spiritual significations which lie behind the corporeal manifestations thereof. This tendency arises from use and familiarity and

from want of reflection. It is no reason whatever, however, for attempting to cut down our external religious practices. Such a course of action would only cut us off more hopelessly from the spiritual world. But it is a reason for examination of conscience as to whether we are making a right use of all the external means for arriving at internal graces. It is a reason for asking ourselves whether we stop short at the letter, the letter which killeth, or whether we go on through the letter to the spirit, the spirit which giveth life.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

EXTERNAL WORSHIP

The ceremonial worship of the Old Dispensation was, of course, abolished when Christ inaugurated the new reign of grace, but not all ceremonies and rites were thereby abolished. The principle of religious forms was not affected. In itself it was good, since God had sanctioned it; and could become evil only by the accident of abuse. Not all external worship was condemned, but only such as was vain and superstitious, only such as was not accompanied by, and was not the expression of, and was made the substitute for, "adoration in spirit," the internal worship of the soul.

—*John H. Stapleton.*

PICTURES A MEANS OF INSTRUCTION

These windows, with the statues and pictures about the church, have been for ages a school of art and religion in which the most unlettered could study with profit. The Church is the greatest teacher in all the ages. Methods of instruction, which are to-day being "discovered," have been in use with her from time immemorial. She has used the object lesson, and the method of teaching by plays and games, by song and story, by pilgrimage and pageantry. But, second only after preaching, her favourite method in past ages seems to have been to instruct men in the truths of religion by means of painting and sculpture. Reading takes to-day a place more prominent perhaps than even preaching; but in an age when few could read, the Church employed the most efficacious means of religious instruction. In doing so she rendered a service not only to the illiterate members of the flock, but to every man who is capable of artistic feeling. She has patronized art with a lavish hand, and she has offered in her churches, for the poor as well as the wealthy, the richest art treasures in the world. The churches have been the art galleries of the common people.—*J. Reilly.*

CEREMONIES SATISFY THE NATURAL INSTINCT

There is a natural instinct too, anterior to all reasoning, which is satisfied only by the acts and solemnities of religious worship.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

SIGNS AND CEREMONIES

Signs and ceremonies appointed by men, or even by the Church, for devotional purposes, do not convey grace, nor do they forgive sin, since they are not of Divine institution. The Sacraments, on the contrary, are directly instituted by God Himself, and it is He that gives supernatural efficiency to material instruments. It is God, not man, who acts in the Sacraments. The ministry of men,

the substances used, the words uttered, and so forth, are but the conditions under which He acts; but in all cases the chief agent is God, who remits original sin in Baptism, absolves in the Sacrament of Penance, consecrates in the Mass, and so on, of the other channels of Divine grace. Hence, as compared with the Sacraments, all other ceremonies are what St. Paul calls mere "weak" and needy elements" (Gal. iv, 9).—*Bishop A. MacDonald.*

Let them be sprinkled with the Water of Purification.
—*Numb.* VIII, 7.

CEREMONIES A MEANS OF EXPRESSION

Ceremonies in the Catholic Church, while being forms of beauty and an artistic embellishment of worship, are intended and employed as a method of expression, a language. They speak to God and to the believer, not alone by words, as does the orator; nor by varied sounds, as does the musician; nor by colours, as does the painter; nor by graceful movements, as does the actor; but by all these together, and many others. They, therefore, have a meaning; they speak the language which is plain, clear, natural, whose significance is obvious to any one who takes the pains to understand.
—*John H. Stapleton.*

Praise Him with sound of trumpet: praise Him with psaltery and harp.—Praise Him with timbrel and choir: praise Him with strings and organs.—Praise Him on high sounding cymbals: praise Him on cymbals of joy; let every spirit praise the Lord.—*Ps.* CL, 3-5.

To Thee, O God, I will sing a new canticle: on the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings I will sing praises to Thee.
—*Ps.* CXLIII, 9.

CEREMONIES ORDAINED BY GOD

Christ ordained visible signs for the dispensation of His grace in the Sacraments, first, that we might know for certain when the invisible grace is communicated, and that we may prepare ourselves for the reception of this grace; secondly, the Church is the visible representative of the invisible God, therefore, it is befitting that she dispense the invisible grace of God in a visible way.

They shall make Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell in the midst of them.—Ex. XXV, 8.

They shall pour living waters . . . into a vessel.—And a man that is clean shall dip hyssop in them, and shall sprinkle therewith all the Tent and all furniture, and the men that are defiled with touching any such thing.—Numb. XIX, 17-18.

THE STORY OF NAAMAN THE SYRIAN

Naaman the Syrian went to Eliseus to be cured of leprosy. The prophet of God declined to see him, but sent a messenger bidding him go and wash in the Jordan seven times. And Naaman was angry and went away saying: "I thought he would have come out to me, and standing would have invoked the name of the Lord his God,

and touched with his hand the place of the leprosy and healed me." But, being better advised, he at length went down to the Jordan, and he washed seven times according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh was restored as the flesh of a little child, and he was made clean.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

TWO FALLACIES CONCERNING CEREMONIES

The true worship of God consists in steering clear of two predominant fallacies, fallacies which have played a role in the whole history of religion and which have never been more rampant than they are at the present day. The one is that which would do away with all rite and ceremony and worship God in what it is pleased to call "the religion of the spirit." It is more theoretical than it is practical, professed more in books and erudite journals than in real life. The other is more practical than theoretical. It consists in practicing a kind of religion which is all form and ceremony, with little or no inward faith and spiritual life.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

A PROTESTANT ON THE EXTERNALS OF CATHOLIC WORSHIP

One method by which Christianity has laboured to soften the characters of men has been through the imagination. Our imaginations affect our moral character, and, in the case of the poor especially, the cultivation of this part of our nature is of inestimable importance. Rooted to a single spot, excluded from most of the interests that animate the minds of other men, condemned to constant and plodding labour, their whole natures would have been hopelessly contracted, were there no sphere in which their imaginations could expand. Religion is the one romance of the poor. It alone extends the narrow horizon of their thoughts, supplies the images of their dreams, allures them to the supersensual and ideal. . . . It is the peculiarity of the Christian types that, while they have fascinated the imagination, they have also purified the heart. . . . "More than any spoken eloquence, more than any dogmatic teaching, they (the externals of Catholic worship) transform and subdue his character."—*Lecky.*

THE CHURCH, THE HOUSE OF GOD

It is in vain that other religions try to copy the material beauty of the Catholic Church and her external forms, or even the devotions of the Catholic faithful. They may think that by reproducing the material forms of Catholic worship they will infuse life into their religions. But these forms are rather the signs of life than sources of life. The secret of that life which is so impressive in the Catholic churches, the source of it is the Real Presence of the Son of God under the Sacramental Species. The flickering red light that burns before the altar, as soon as it is seen, changes the whole aspect of the church to the Catholic's eye. It bears upon him the solemn conviction that this is really and truly the house of God and the gate of Heaven. Strangers cannot understand the devotion of the average Catholic congregation; there is an adequate cause for it—the Real Presence—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE ALTAR

In the early Church it was the custom to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice on the tombs of the martyrs. That custom now survives in the Catholic altar. The altar stone has a receptacle in which relics of martyrs are placed. The receptacle is called the sepulchre.

—Thomas J. Gerrard.

The Altar shall be sanctified by My Glory.—I will sanctify also the Tabernacle of the Testimony with the Altar, and Aaron with his sons, to do the office of Priesthood unto Me.—And I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel and will be their God:—And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, Who have brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might abide among them, I the Lord their God.—Ex. XXIX, 45-46.

ADVENT

It is impossible to say, with any certainty, when this season of preparation was first instituted. All the evidence seems to show that it originated in the Western Church, but there does not seem to have been any uniform practice to begin with. Now we may regard Advent in two ways: (*a*) as a time of preparation by penance for the coming of Christ, and (*b*) as a series of ecclesiastical offices drawn up to prepare the people for the feast of Christmas. Both the penance and the liturgy of Advent are most interesting in their history and it will, I think, help us to appreciate this season if we briefly recall it.—*Bernard Hayes, O. S. B.*

The character of Advent is not only one of penance: it bids us also prepare for Christ, and we must try to appreciate the liturgy, for in it are contained the true sentiments which those should possess who are looking for Christ's coming. The Church is a society for the true worship of God, and therefore she has a public and official system of worship. This is the liturgy: it has grown gradually around the great facts of redemption, but always and everywhere the Church has watched and intervened to condemn what was false, to correct what was inaccurate, to reject what was inordinate, so that we may say she has watched over her liturgy as she has watched over her Faith, knowing how intimately these are connected. We may feel great security, therefore, that, i nacquiring the sentiments of the liturgy, we have the sentiments which best accord with the mystery of redemption which they surround and express. What sentiments, then, do we find in the Advent liturgy as a preparation for the coming of Christ?

The liturgy, my dear brethren, is full of reference to the threefold coming of Christ of which I have already spoken. St. Bernard describes it in the following words: "In the first coming, He comes in flesh and in weakness; in the second, He comes in spirit and in power; in the third, He comes in glory and in majesty."

—Bernard Hayes, O. S. B.

EASTER

There can be no doubt, that the feast of Easter is the oldest feast of the Christian Church—in fact, it is as old as Christianity,

and is the connecting link between the Old and the New Testaments. The Jewish festival of the Pasch continued to be kept by the Christians, but with a new signification. The Apostles, wishing to break with the Jewish Synagogue, decreed that Sunday, the first day of the week, the day on which our Lord rose from the tomb, should be the holy day—the Lord's day. Now, the feast of the Jewish Passover was kept on the fourteenth day of the March moon, which fell by turns on each day of the week. The Apostles, therefore, forbade the Christian Pasch to be celebrated on this day even should it be a Sunday ,and ordered that it should everywhere be kept on the Sunday following. Ecclesiastical history in the early centuries resounds with disputes about the uniform celebration of the Easter festival. Thus we read of Pope St. Victor (188 A. D.) threatening the Eastern churches with excommunication if they do not conform to the Roman custom in this matter; the Council of Nicæa (325 A. D.) decreed that all must conform and keep the feast on the Sunday following the fourteenth day of the March moon. In England, St. Bede tells us, that the British Christians and the Roman missionaries were kept apart in great measure by their differences concerning the time of celebrating Easter. What does all this show us, my brethren, except that the annual celebration of our Lord's Resurrection has been, by the Apostles themselves and by the Church, considered of the greatest importance for the spiritual welfare of the faithful?—*Bernard Hayes, O. S. B.*

CHAPTER VI

THE LOVE OF GOD AND OF OUR NEIGHBOUR; THE VIRTUES

GOD, THE SUPREME GOOD

A man ought therefore to pass and ascend above everything created, and perfectly to forsake himself, and in ecstasy of mind to stand and see that no creatures can be compared with Thee; because Thou infinitely transcendest them all. And unless a man be elevated in spirit, and set at liberty from all creatures, and wholly united to God, whatever he knows and whatever he has is of no great weight. Long shall he be little, and lie grovelling beneath, who esteems anything great, but only one immense, Eternal God. And whatsoever is not God is nothing, and ought to be accounted as nothing.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE LOVE OF GOD

The love of God is never idle; just as fire is inconceivable except as actively burning and glowing, so is His love inconceivable without activity. It produces much good in those on whom it is bestowed, but its most excellent result is the grace which God infuses into our souls.—*St. Thomas Aquinas.*

GOD, THE AUTHOR OF LOVE

In Me the love of thy friend must stand; and for Me he is to be loved, whoever he be that appears to thee good, and is very dear to thee in this life. Without Me no friendship is of any strength, nor will it be durable; nor is that love true and pure of which I am not the Author.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE WOOD OF THE CROSS

There is no wood better fitted to feed the fire of Divine love than the Wood of the Cross.—*St. Ignatius.*

GOD DEMANDS OUR LOVE

God demands our heart; that is, He asks our love. A tyrant may be satisfied with the mere submission and outward obedience of his subjects. Thus of Caligula, a Roman emperor, the saying is recorded: *Oderint, dum metuant,* Little do I care if my subjects hate me, as long as they only fear me. That was the rule of the iron rod, hateful and precarious. God's rule is a rule of love, a sweet yoke and an easy burden. God wishes to inspire love, not fear. He looks for cheerful servants, for enthusiastic followers, not trembling slaves. Therefore, the first tribute He requires is that of love. There is an external service of God, in word and gesture, pleasing to Him, it is true, but yet only an outward figure and a

shadow. Then there is an internal service of God, consisting in faith, hope and charity, in devotion and loyalty. This is the adoration in spirit and in truth, the soul of religion, the quickening pulse of all outward practices. The external service alone can never satisfy God; the internal allegiance will necessarily blossom out in religious exercises. So God demands our love, the surrender of our heart, and at once He possesses the whole man.—*Charles Bruehl.*

OUR SAVIOUR'S LOVE

When our Saviour dwelt in person upon earth no human need was left unanswered. A woman came and touched the hem of His garment that she might be cured of her ailment, and her prayer was answered; a ruler met Him in the way and begged that his dying child might live, and Jesus infused new strength; a mother and again a sister were in grief over the loss of a loved one, and by His almighty power, Jesus restored life; a penitent at His feet asked for pardon, and the merciful forgiveness of God was granted; St. John, that soul of love, seeking more love, besought the sweet privilege of resting his head upon the Master's Breast, and the privilege was granted him. They were all in need; they all strove humbly and lovingly to have those needs met and answered; and they did not place their trust in vain. If we come as they came, with true humility, with heartfelt love and place our needs before God, do you think He will be less good, less loving toward us?

—*Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

WHY WE MUST LOVE THE HOLY GHOST

We must love Him because He is God, the equal of the Everlasting Father and His Only Begotten Son, the Term or Perfecter of the Blessed Trinity, the substantial, primal, love proceeding from the Father and the Son. We must love Him because from Him, the Creator-Spirit, are all things, the world, man, society, Mary, Christ, the Scriptures, the Church; because by Him every soul is cleansed of sin and sanctified, and through Him "all are made children of God, inheritors of God's kingdom and joint-heirs with Christ." Devotion to Him, together with the devotion to Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, should be the chief devotion of Catholics; all minor loves should pale before these as the stars of the night pale before the coming of dawn.—*Bertrand L. Conway, C. S. P.*

LOVE AND AMBITION

Ambition is a caricature of love. Love is patient for the sake of the eternal, ambition is patient for the sake of the temporal. Love caters to the poor, ambition to the wealthy. Love bears everything for the truth, ambition for vanity. Both exercise faith and hope, but for different purposes.—*St. Peter Chrysologus.*

THE PEACE OF GOD

It is this charity and meekness and heavenly consolation, begotten of the peace of God, which are the comfort of the Saints, and which support them in their bitter trials. St. Paul, speaking of himself, says: "I am filled with comfort. I exceeding abound with joy in

all our tribulations" (II. Cor. vii, 4). St. Peter lies in prison bound with chains and doomed to be handed over to the fury of a mob who clamour for his death; but he sleeps so soundly and so peacefully that he did not wake from his happy slumber until an angel striking him in the side raised him up (Acts xii, 7). St. Jerome, when death came gently in the wallet of time to call him away from his labours, addressed it as his dearest brother, and spoke to those who stood by his dying bed in the beautiful words of one who sees in death only the peaceful opening of the portals of eternity, "My friends, do you bring me the news that I must die? May God reward you for the happy tidings! Participate in my joys, be witnesses of my happiness. Behold the precious moment that will make me free forever. O blessed hour of death, sweet, peaceful sleep, come and close my eyes!" Truly do the Saints experience that security which is found in the peace of God. "I will give peace in your coasts: you shall sleep and there shall be none to make you afraid" (Levit. xxvi, 6).—*J. A. M. Gillis.*

CHARITY THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW

According to St. Paul, charity or love is the fulfilling of the law. St. Francis de Sales well explains how this is the case. He says: "The perfection of charity is so far elevated above that of the other virtues that, though it communicates itself to them all, it can not receive any additional value from them, not even from obedience, in which all the other virtues participate most abundantly. For though we obey in loving God, yet our love does not derive its perfection from obedience, but from its sovereign and eternal object; if it is the most excellent of all virtues, it is not because we obey in practicing it, but because its motive is the most excellent of all perfections, being Divine. In observing the commandment of love, we certainly obey, and we prove our love by obeying; but the perfection of obedience is not derived from the docility which animates our love, but from the love which inflames our obedience. Hence we may conclude, that, as God is the principle and the term of all that is good, so charity, which is the source and origin of all holy affections, is likewise their end and perfection" (Treatise on "The Love of God," Bk. xi, Ch. ix.).—*Arthur Devine, C. P.*

As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after Thee, O God.—My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God: when shall I come and appear before the Face of God?
—*Ps.* XLI, 2-3.

There remain faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greater of these is charity.—I. *Cor.* XIII, 13.

If I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.—I. *Cor.* XIII, 2.

Charity covereth all sins.—Prov. X, 12.

TRUE CHARITY MUST BE BASED UPON THE LOVE OF GOD

The only true charity is that which is based upon the love of God. The second commandment is like to the first, and this is so to the extent of being practically the same commandment. We may call charity towards others the Love of God at work. Why do you serve and help others? Is it because you are of a kind disposition, and find pleasure in so doing? Is it to get a social reputation, to read your name at the head of subscription lists, or to hear yourself spoken of with praise? Is it an easy way to paying your debts to God? Is it your custom, instead of denying your self-indulgence in this or that obvious way, to write a check for some charity? Alas! my brethren, such as these have received their reward. God did not promise to recompense those who gave a "cup of cold water," but those who gave it *"in His Name."* This purity of motive must be at the back of our charitable actions, if we wish for the reward of charity. A mistake is made by many who think that charity is action merely. It is more than this. Action holds the second place, the virtue of charity the first. A virtue is a disposition of the will, or a habit which inclines us to action on suitable occasions. It is based upon the reasoning of the intellect. According to the clearness of view will be the strength of the disposition to action. Thus we all recognize at once the duty we have of supporting our parents. This view becomes clearer, more obvious, and more compelling when sickness and poverty have rendered them helpless. Then the will is strongly moved to act. First, then, we must try to appreciate how truly charity to others is the teaching and spirit of the New Law. This we have already considered, and quotations from the New Testament could be multiplied sufficiently to convince us overwhelmingly. Our judgment, when we stand before God's throne, will be of the same nature as the judgment we have given to others: "Forgive, and you shall be forgiven" (Matt. vi, 12). "With what measure you judge, you shall be judged" (Matt. vii, 1). "Judge not, and you shall not be judged" (*Ibid.*). "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."—*B. Hayes, O. S. B.*

THE MERCY OF GOD OUR ONLY SALVATION

Before God we are all debtors and sinners. If God were exacting and dealt with us in strict justice, not one of us would escape. His wrath would devour us like fire. Our only salvation, our only hope, is the mercy of God. Our sins are before us day and night, glaring and red, crying to Heaven and clamouring for vengeance. Who will blot out the sad record of our many failings? Who will propitiate the just anger of our offended God? There is but one answer. Deeds of mercy will cancel our sins.—*Charles Bruehl.*

CHARITY BLOTS OUT SINS

She is the queen of virtues, lifting up man to heavenly heights and pleading powerfully in his behalf. Mercy has strong wings; she penetrates the clouds, soars above the stars and enters into the very heavens. This you may learn from the sacred writings, wherein you read: Thy prayers and thy alms are ascended for a memorial in the sight of God. This means: though you have many sins, fear not,

if you have alms and works of mercy to plead for you; they will blot out the handwriting that stands against you.

—St. John Chrysostom.

BEATIFICATION REFUSED ON ACCOUNT OF AN OFFENSE AGAINST CHARITY

In the eighteenth century there lived in Rome a priest having a reputation, and a just reputation, for high sanctity, confirmed even by miracles. It fell to his lot to attend a criminal, condemned to death. The unfortunate man refused to repent, and uttered continually the most horrible blasphemies. For three whole days the "saint," as he was popularly called, besought this poor wretch not to die in final impenitence. It was all to no purpose. Even on the very scaffold, which the good priest mounted with him, the condemned man refused his ministrations and remained obstinate. At last, as the moment of the execution arrived, the baffled priest turned to the crowd around the scaffold, and cried out in accents of despair, "People! come and see the death of a reprobate." Forty years afterwards the process of beatification of this priest, who had died in the odour of sanctity, was attempted. His virtues were heroic; his miracles appeared well-proved. But his cause was rejected because of those few rash words, which were judged to constitute a deviation from the spirit of the Church. Therefore the Church refused him the honour of her altars.—*H. G. Hughes.*

ADMONISHING AN ERRING BROTHER

Those who are not superiors are not bound by any obligation in justice to correct evildoers. But the Divine law of charity obliges all to admonish an erring brother when it can be done without prejudice to oneself and with profit to the erring one.

—J. A. M. Gillis.

WILFUL AVERSION AND NATURAL ANTIPATHY

The form of hatred which includes wishing evil to another is more sinful than that which stops at a mere aversion. Still the latter is sinful, and may be gravely sinful; for we are bound to love all, even our enemies; and as Christians we may not exclude *anyone* from that charity which Jesus Christ has commanded. But, dear brethren, when I speak of *aversion,* as a form of hatred, I mean *wilful* aversion; the deliberate exclusion of a fellow being from that charity to which we are obliged by the Christian law. And we must remember, dear brethren, that this is a question, not of *liking,* but of the exercise of Christian charity; a matter more of the will than of the feelings. We can not *like* everyone: there are persons for whom one feels a natural antipathy.—*H. G. Hughes.*

CHARITY AND PATIENCE

All during his holy life John the Almoner was renowned for his bountiful charity to the poor. To convince himself of the Saint's generosity, a rich man once clothed himself in tattered garments and stationed himself in front of the hospital which the Almoner was accustomed to pass. As soon as he noticed the holy man he cried out: "Have mercy on me, for I am wretched, having just been freed

from prison." Turning to his servant who carried his money, St. John said: "Give this man six pieces of silver." The stranger having received the offering, thanked his benefactor and went away. As soon as the Saint was out of sight, the rich man again changed his unseemly clothes, donned others, and meeting the servant of God on another street, said: "Take pity on me, Father, for I am in great need." This time seven pieces of money were given him. Under a different guise, for a third time the man presented himself for an alms, whereupon the Saint's servant thus addressed him: "This is the third time to-day, Father, that this beggar has importuned you. What shall I do?" "Give him twelve pieces of silver," was the reply, "for it may be Jesus Christ Himself who has assumed the guise to try me." Thus was the rich man convinced of John the Almoner's patience and charity.—*Frederick Reuter.*

THE WORDS OF ST. PETER VS. THE WORDS OF THE WEALTHY

The Apostle St. Peter said: "Silver and gold I have none, but what I have I give thee, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth arise and walk" (Acts III, 6). The wealthy of our days, however, say: "Faith and charity I have none, but what I have, silver and gold, I will not part with."—*St. Jerome.*

THE THREE QUALITIES OF CHARITY

True charity consists in three things, in *giving,* in *forgiving* and in *interceding.*—*Albertus Magnus.*

THE DUTIES OF CHARITY

And as by this law are inculcated charity and love, it must also enjoin all those offices and actions that follow in their train. "Charity is patient," says St. Paul (I Cor. xiii, 4); we are therefore commanded patience, in which the Saviour teaches we shall possess our souls (Luke, xxi, 19). "Charity is kind" (I Cor. xiii, 4); beneficence is, therefore, her companion and associate. The virtue of benignity and beneficence is one of great latitude; and its principal office consists in relieving the necessities of the poor, in feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked; and the more each one stands in need of our succour, the greater should be our liberality towards him.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

THE CHARITABLE NEED NOT FEAR DEATH

He that will have loved the poor during his life, will behold the moment of death approach without fear.—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

SOCIAL SERVICE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Justice Brewer (Non-Cath.), of the United States Supreme Court, delivering a lecture at Haverford College (Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers), asked: "What single organization has done more for the orphan than the Catholic Church? What one, through hospital or asylum, more for the sick and afflicted? If you were to select a single face and form as typical expression of the great thought of charity and kindness, whose would you select other than the face and form of a Sister of Charity? . . . Surely, as the

vision of this rises in your mind, you see the presence and form of those whose faith is in the Man of Galilee."

CHARITY A CHRISTIAN VIRTUE

Christianity for the first time made charity a rudimentary virtue, giving it a leading place in the moral type, and in the exhortations of its teachers. For the first time in the history of mankind it has inspired many thousands of men and women to devote their entire lives to the single object of assuaging the sufferings of humanity. It has indissolubly united, in the minds of men, the idea of supreme goodness with that of active and constant benevolence.

—Lecky (Non-Cath.).

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS UNKNOWN IN PAGAN ANTIQUITY

The records of pagan antiquity will be searched in vain for any institution to support those who are unable to maintain themselves.

A LEGEND OF ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

It is said that St. Elizabeth of Hungary, who was distinguished for her charity, was opposed in her work by her husband. A legend relates that once she was carrying some bread to the poor, which she tried to conceal from her husband's eye. He, however, discovered the bundle which she carried, and commanded her to open it. When it was opened, the bread had turned to roses, red and white, sending forth sweet fragrance and beautiful to look upon. Gentle deeds of charity always turn fragrant and beautiful in our hands.

WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOUR?

St. Augustine tells us that he is our neighbour who at any given moment needs our help, whom God has placed within our reach and has, as it were, thrown upon our care. Providence had sent the priest and Levite along that very road on which the Samaritan had come to grief; they should have proved neighbours and friends to him; but they sadly neglected their duty. Providence also sends us on errands of mercy; perchance there is some poor Lazarus at the threshold of our door; will we be blind to all these splendid opportunities?

WHAT WE SEE IN OTHERS IS USUALLY THE REFLECTION OF WHAT WE ARE

A boy in the woods thought he heard the voice of another boy not far off. He shouted, "Halloa, there!" and the voice shouted back, "Halloa, there!" "Who are you?" he again cried, and the voice replied "Who are you?" "You are a mean boy"; again the cry came back "You are a mean boy." He went home and told his mother that there was a bad boy in the woods. His mother understood how it was, and said to him: "Well, speak kindly to him, and see if he does not speak kindly to you." The boy went to the woods again and shouted, "You are a good boy." Of course the reply came, "You are a good boy." "I love you." "I love you," said the voice. The story of the echo is a story of life. What we see that is disagreeable and evil in our neighbours is generally the reflection of what we are ourselves.

LENIENCY TOWARD OUR NEIGHBOUR

Thou knowest well enough how to excuse and colour thy own doings, and thou wilt not take the excuses of others. It were more just that thou shouldst accuse thyself, and excuse thy brother.

—*Thomas à Kempis.*

Why seest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye; and seest not the beam that is in thy own eye?—Or how sayest thou to thy brother: Let me cast the mote out of thy eye; and behold a beam in thy own eye?—Thou hypocrite! cast out first the beam out of thy own eye, and then shalt thou see to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.—Matt. VII, 3-5.

Judgment without mercy to him that hath not done mercy. And mercy exalteth itself above judgment.—James II, 13.

Forgive thy neighbour if he hath hurt thee; and then shall thy sins be forgiven to thee when thou prayest.—Ecclus. XXVIII, 2.

All things, therefore, whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets.

—*Matt.* VII, 12.

The love of our neighbour worketh no evil. Love therefore is the fulfilling of the Law.—Rom. XIII, 10.

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfil the Law of Christ.—Gal. VI, 2.

CHARITY TOWARDS ALL

On one occasion it happened that a poor woman in great distress went to a pious Archbishop in France to ask of him an alms. "My lord, what shall I give her?" asked the secretary. "How old is she?" asked the venerable prelate. "She appears to be about seventy years of age." "Does she seem to be in great need of help?" "She says she is, my lord." "We must, then, believe her word. Give her twenty-five francs." "Twenty-five francs, my lord!" said the secretary in astonishment; "that is surely too much to give to one like her; moreover, she is a Jewess." "Oh, that makes the case quite different. Go and give her fifty francs and thank her for coming to honour me with a visit."

CHARITY TOWARD NON-CATHOLICS

It is our duty to get rid of all false and pessimistic notions regarding non-Catholics in general, and converts in particular. I heard an old Irishman in Iowa say once, "I would not so much as tip my hat to a Protestant." His hostile attitude was born of old days of bitter hatred and persecution in Ireland. It was out of place in free America; it was foreign to the spirit of Christ Jesus. I have heard others say, "Nearly every Protestant is in bad faith." They ignored the strong influences of early education, the power of a hostile non-

Catholic environment and literature to prejudice the minds of honest men. They generalized from a particular case of bad faith they had come across in their own experience. Is it not the more Catholic way to suppose every man sincere and earnest until he be proved a hypocrite? I met lately a very sincere Protestant, a college bred man of twenty-eight, who was engaged to marry a Catholic girl. The marriage day was set; the parents on both sides saw no objections to the match. His betrothed had asked him, however, to study the Catholic Catechism and read a few Catholic books in the few months prior to their marriage. He undertook the study with the firm resolve to become a Catholic, if he could satisfy his conscience as to the truth of the Church's claims. Imagine his surprise to have a Catholic tell him: "Why all this pretense? You know you are merely doing this to please your sweetheart. You would become a Mohammedan to marry her." It was a sad commentary on the brotherly love he had expected to find in the Church of Jesus Christ. It might have been enough to make him hate the Catholic Church forever had he not intelligence enough to distinguish between the Church and a stupid member thereof.—*Bertrand L. Conway, C. S. P.*

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

When St. John, the beloved disciple of Our Lord, was a very old man, and not able to walk, the faithful used to carry him to the church, that they might hear him preach to them the heavenly lessons he had heard from the lips of his Divine Master.

He could not preach to them long sermons, because he was so feeble, so they listened to him with the greatest eagerness, that they might hear every word he said. But St. John always said to them the same words: "My little children, love one another."

The faithful at length became weary of hearing the same thing so often repeated to them, so they one day said to him: "Master, why do you always preach to us the same words?"

St. John answered: "My little children, it is the commandment of the Lord; if it is done, it is enough."—*History of the Church.*

LOVE OF THE BLESSED CURÉ OF ARS FOR SOULS

One day a certain priest asked the Curé of Ars what he would do if God gave him his choice to go into Heaven at once, or to labour for many years in this world for the conversion of sinners. He answered: "I think that I would remain on earth." "Is that possible?" exclaimed the other. "Would you not rather be in Heaven happy with the Saints, and free from all temptations and dangers?" The good Curé answered: "Yes, it is true the Saints are happy, but they are living on their interest. They cannot any longer glorify God by labouring, by sufferings, and by sacrifices for the salvation of souls." "And would you wish to live in the world to the very end of it for the sake of poor sinners?" "Yes, I would," he replied.

PATIENCE WITH OTHERS

Endeavour to be patient in supporting the defects and infirmities

of others, of what kind soever; because thou also hast many things which others must bear withal.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

OUR MUTUAL DEPENDENCE UPON ONE ANOTHER

The voice of nature calls on us to exercise this brotherly love towards our fellow beings. We are all children of the same Heavenly Father, and consequently members of the same great family. We may be separated by degrees of standing in society, by the accidents of wealth or poverty, or by the influence which we wield among our fellow men; but there is between us the common tie of brotherhood which binds us together as children of the one great Father. Even the story of human sorrow proclaims that tie of brotherhood, as the poet so beautifully expressed it, "One touch of nature makes the whole world akin." Our mutual dependence upon one another as the members of the one human society is well expressed by Caroline, Queen of England:

"Unthinking, idle, wild, and young,
I laughed, and danced, and talked, and sung;
Thinking in those hours of glee
That all this world was made for me.

But when the hour of trial came,
And sickness shook this trembling frame,
To me occurred how sad 'twould be
If all this world were made for me."

—*J. A. M. Gillis.*

WITHOUT CHARITY ONE CANNOT BE A GOOD CATHOLIC

John is, in the eyes of everybody, a good Catholic. For does he not go to Mass faithfully every Sunday and holiday, and regularly approach the Sacraments? He could not be induced to eat meat on a Friday, he has a well earned reputation for probity in his business dealings, he is a model husband and father. Surely he has a right to be called a good Catholic. No, my brethren, he is not a good Catholic. He lacks, in God's sight, the distinctive mark of a follower of Christ. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." Some time ago a rival in business did him an injury, or an acquaintance has spoken ill of him. He has never forgiven that man. He refuses to speak to him, or he insults him when they meet; he thwarts his plans, or, if no opportunity has yet offered, he nurses his wrath, and repeats with steadfast purpose, "Never mind, I will get even with that fellow some day." Perhaps he takes credit to himself for his generosity in works of religion or charity. But he has forgotten, or has never heard the warning of Christ: "I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment. If, therefore, thou offer thy gift at the altar and then remember that thy brother hath anything against thee, leave, then, thy offering before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then coming thou shalt offer thy gift" (Matt. v, 22-25).

—*James J. Fox.*

Mary is a person of exemplary piety, a frequent communicant, and she spends much time in church. She has a horror of mortal sin; the recurrent note in her weekly Confession is, "Father, I have been uncharitable in my conversation." This is her inadequate accusation of the fact that she bears a grudge against some person, refuses to speak to her, takes every opportunity to disparage her, and helps along the circulation of any unfavourable stories that she may hear concerning her. So with all her Confessions and Communions she makes no progress in the spiritual life, in the love of God. Her fault is ample proof that when she says her prayers she does not ponder the meaning of the "Our Father," and it is no rash judgment to suspect that much of her other prayers and devotion are equally empty. One victory over her dislike for her neighbour, one honest effort to banish from her heart her feelings of resentment, would be more pleasing to God, more fruitful of grace for herself, than many vain repetitions of empty prayer.

—*James J. Fox.*

Let there be no quarrel.—Gen. XIII, 8.

Better is a dry morsel with joy than a house full of victims with strife.—Prov. XVII, 1.

The peace of God, which surpasseth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.—Philipp. IV, 7.

Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God.—Matt. V, 9.

Much peace have they that love Thy law; and to them there is no stumbling-block.—Ps. CXVIII, 165.

Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.—Like the precious ointment on the head, that ran down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron; which ran down to the skirt of his garment:—as the dew of Hermon, which descendeth upon Mount Sion.—For there the Lord hath commanded blessing, and life for evermore.—Ps. CXXXII, 1-4.

SEE HOW THOSE CHRISTIANS *HATE* ONE ANOTHER

"See how these Christians love one another." Such was the feature of Christianity that most deeply impressed itself upon the thoughts of men, strangers to the compassionate love of brotherhood that took its inspiration from an example of a life of perfect, self-forgetting love. Alas! that this can be called true of Christians as a whole no longer. "See how those Christians *hate* one another," has become the jeer and byword of the unbeliever. When men who look askance at the teaching of Christ as unpractical and out of date, behold in the world among those who profess to be disciples of the Cross the very faults which Christ condemned—petty jealousies, detractions, backbitings, angry words, enmities, long-continued feuds, unceasing, jarring discords—can we wonder that they find in our unchristian, unchristlike lives the realization of their worst sus-

icions, the complete justification (as they think) of their criticism? Live, they tell us, as you say Christ lived and taught His followers o live; be loving, gentle, kind, unselfish, forgiving, and *then* we vill believe that Christianity is no mere poetical fancy or idle tale of a bygone uncritical age, but practicable and possible in the present world of everyday life.—*W. R. Carson.*

DISSENSIONS AMONG CHRISTIANS

Few things are more scandalous and calamitous to the Church hen dissensions among the brethren, nothing more alien from the spirit of Jesus Christ. St. Paul continually exhorts the faithful in his epistles to beware of such things. His great fear was this: 'Lest, perhaps, when I come I shall not find you such as I would . . . lest, perhaps, contentions, envyings, animosities, dissensions, detractions, whisperings, seditions, be among you" (II Cor. xii, 20). Elsewhere he reprehends his converts for their dissensions. "Dare any of you having a matter against another go to be judged before the unjust and not before the Saints . . . I speak to your shame . . Brother goeth to law with brother and that before unbelievers. Already there is plainly a fault among you that you have lawsuits one with another. Why do you not rather put up with injury? Why do you not suffer yourselves to be defrauded? But you do wrong and defraud, and that to your brethren" (I Cor. vi). Let us bear in mind also the words of Our Lord about forgiveness, and remember that they apply with double force to those enmities which exist between brethren in the faith. "When you shall stand to pray forgive, if you have aught against any man; that your Father also who is in Heaven may forgive you your sins. But if you will not forgive, neither will your Father who is in Heaven forgive you your sins" (Mark xi, 25-26).—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

THE POWER OF LOVE

There is an ancient legend of St. Modobert, which tells us that his mother was blind; and one day, while looking at her, he felt so sympathetic for her that he rushed forward and kissed her blind eyes. And immediately she received her sight. This is only a legend, but it is a great truth that the kiss of love has healing in it, and may bring to many a blind eye eternal illumination.

LOVE LIGHTENS BURDENS

Humboldt says that the copper-coloured native of Central America is far more accustomed than the European traveler to the burning heat of the climate, yet complains more when upon a journey, because he is stimulated by no interest. The same Indian who would complain when, in botanizing, he was loaded with a box full of plants, would row his canoe fourteen or fifteen hours together against the current without a murmur, because he wished to return to his family. Labours of love are light. Love much, and you can do much. Impossibilities disappear when zeal is fervent.

THE LOVE OF ENEMIES

The offices of beneficence and goodness, which are in themselves exalted, if done to enemies become still more exalted, for the

Saviour says: "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you" (Matt. v, 44); and the Apostle admonishes in these words: "If thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat; if he thirst give him drink; for doing this thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good" (Rom. xii, 20 *sq.*).

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

The love of the neighbour does not mean loving only those that please you, even the pagans love their friends. The Christian love of the neighbour is proved by the love of the enemy, and the love of those who antagonize and persecute you.—*Albertus Magnus.*

I say to you: Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you.—For if you love them that love you, what reward shall you have? do not even the publicans this?—Matt. V, 44, 46.

Of the Jesuit Father Binet it is told that while walking through the streets of Paris one day he met with a physician who was known as a bitter opponent of the Society of Jesus. The physician stopped Father Binet and said to him "Do you know who I am? I am the worst enemy of the society you belong to." Father Binet calmly and amiably replied, "My dear sir, if we both succeed in working out our salvation, we shall be fast friends in Heaven."

FORGIVING FOR THE SAKE OF GOD

Blessed John Gualbert belonged to a noble and wealthy Florentine family, and was well and carefully brought up. As he approached manhood, the temptations common to riches and high position overpowered him, and he plunged into a life of dissipation and vice. Nothing but God's merciful goodness could have rescued him from the depths of misery into which he had fallen. His only brother Hugo had been murdered by another noble, and John resolved to avenge his death and kill his murderer. He was constantly looking for an opportunity of carrying out his design, and found it on a certain Good Friday, when, being on his way back from the country to Florence, he met this noble in a narrow gorge, where they could not avoid coming face to face.

The murderer threw himself at John's feet, and implored him, for the sake of Christ, whose death they were commemorating that day, to spare his life. For a few moments John was undecided how to act; then the remembrance of his Saviour, praying for His executioners, prevailed, and he offered his hand to his enemy, saying: "I cannot refuse you what you ask in the name of Jesus Christ. I pardon you. Pray for me, that God may forgive me also."—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

THE RELIGION THAT INSPIRES SUCH ACTS MUST SURELY COME FROM GOD

In the course of one of his sermons the late Archbishop Ryan related this incident: During the Civil War two Sisters of Charity while walking one day through the streets of Boston were insulted by a man who was intolerant of everything religious. It happened that,

as time passed, this man entered the army, was wounded in one of the Missouri battles, and was brought to a temporary hospital in charge of these good sisters, where he was most kindly treated. When he was about to die, the sister who attended him begged him to make his peace with God. "Sister," replied the dying soldier, "it is true I have been a bad man, but there is one act of my life weighing more heavily on my conscience than any other. Once I insulted a member of your Order. Were she here now I would fall at her feet, ask her forgiveness, and die in peace." "Be comforted," replied the sister, "she has already pardoned you. The moment you were brought in here I recognized you by the mark on your forehead, but long ago I pardoned you from my heart." "And why," rejoined the soldier, "have you been, if anything, kinder to me than the others?" "Because you insulted me for His sake," she responded, kissing her crucifix. "Then send at once for your priest," begged the dying man. "The religion that inspires such acts must surely come from God."

A certain heretic had conceived the design of assassinating the Duke of Guise, one of the most zealous defenders of the Catholic religion of his days in the kingdom of France. This design was discovered, and the Duke was informed of it. Summoning the intending assassin into his presence, he said to him, with an air of astonishment: "Have I ever done you any wrong, that you should thus desire to kill me?" "No," replied the other, "you have never done me any harm." "Why, then, did you resolve to put me to death?" "It was because I wished to defend my religion," replied his enemy. The Duke made this beautiful answer: "If your religion enjoins you to assassinate your enemy, mine commands me to forgive; I freely pardon you."

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.
—*Luke* XXIII, 34.

FORGIVING AS CHRIST FORGAVE

A penitent of St. Philip Neri on one occasion refused to forgive a man who had injured him. The holy man, seeing that his words made no impression on his hardened heart, took a crucifix into his hands, and placing it before the eyes of the obstinate sinner, said: "Behold, and consider well the example which our Lord and Master has given us. Not only did He Himself forgive even those who crucified Him, but, hanging in agony on the Cross, He prayed to His Heavenly Father also to forgive them. You also daily recite the Lord's Prayer. In doing so," continued the Saint, "you ask of God, not pardon for what you have done against Him, but your own eternal condemnation. Cast yourself on your knees before this image of your Divine Master dying for your sins, and say to Him: 'O Lord Jesus, it was not enough that Thou shouldst die once in the midst of the most awful torments for my salvation; Thou must die again if Thou dost wish to obtain from me that I should pardon my enemy.'"

The Saint said these words in so touching a voice that the man became deeply affected. He burst into tears, and cried out: "O my Father, I forgive—yes, I forgive from my heart him who has offended

me, and I will do for him all that you may ask me, to show the fulness of my forgiveness."

THE CONFIDENCE WE GAIN BY FORGIVING

A certain man was at the point of death who had led an ordinary life and had not been given to great austerities, yet was very calm and happy. The priest asked him if he was afraid to die. "Oh, no," he replied. "I have always kept a guard on my heart, and tried to forget and forgive all the evil that was ever done to me; and I hope that the good God will forgive me as He has promised."

THE MALICE OF REVENGE

The particular malice of revenge consists in this, that every such act of injustice committed with a revengeful purpose takes on a second and a darker dye, inasmuch as it is also a violation of the great distinctive Christian commandment, which calls on us to love our neighbour.—*Bishop Bellord.*

VIRTUES

WHAT IS VIRTUE

Moral goodness, or virtue, consists essentially in conformity to God; and sin is that action in free agents which has no counterpart in God, which is non-existent in Him, and therefore is the contradictory of Him who embraces in Himself all existence. Justice, mercy, peace, benevolence, purity, prudence, are in God; they are essentially good; they are Divine perfections. When we elicit one of these acts we do something which is essentially good; our action resembles the Divine action; it is a virtue. Impurity, dishonesty, hatred, strife, do not exist in God; they have no existence of their own; their existence in us is only the absence, or the extinction in us of that which corresponds to one of God's perfections.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

VIRTUE

Fruit that is worm-eaten does not ripen, it falls and decays. Thus it is with virtue; if the worm of vanity, of pride, or of passion is allowed to infest it it will not last.—*St. Theresa.*

NATURAL VIRTUE

The average of the world is unreal and of no use before God. Its deficiencies are as fatal; its excellencies are of no use except so far as they may lead on to supernatural virtue. We must beware of goodness of this sort; for it may well be that while we think ourselves to be serving God, we are only conforming ourselves to wordly virtues and worldly errors. Let us copy indeed the natural virtues of worldly men, as far as they go, but let us remember that unless our justice abound more than that we shall never enter into the kingdom of Heaven.—*Bishop Bellord.*

There is a way which seemeth just to a man; but the ends thereof lead to death.—Prov. XIV, 12.

THE POWER OF VIRTUE

In the same way as a single spark may cause the destruction of an immense forest, thus a single spark of virtue in a man may wipe out a multitude of sins.—*St. John Climacus.*

NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL VIRTUE

There cannot be any doubt that many of those who do not belong to our Faith, and even persons without any faith, are shining examples of a virtuous life. There are natural and supernatural virtues. Even the pagans practiced natural virtues. We read of Aristides in ancient Greece who handled the funds of the state and had many opportunities for dishonest use of these funds, yet, he was scrupulously honest and died a poor man. Others of the pagans practiced the virtues of temperance, obedience, charity, and others. They did these things for natural motives, therefore, their virtues were natural ones. Christians, however, should practice virtues for a higher motive, namely, because they are pleasing to God. Hence Christian virtues are called supernatural.

WORLDLY VIRTUE

There is a system of virtue which prevails widely in our day. That is the attempt to reduce all goodness to benevolence and the service of man. It is a godless system in spite of much good that is in it, and is not much more than an improved utilitarianism. Utilitarianism is a sort of "enlightened selfishness." This other system seeks the utility of other men, their temporal and material utility. As far as it goes it is good; it has reduced many of the great miseries of life, it has brought into action many amicable qualities and a certain amount of unselfishness; but it is insufficient, and is a poor substitute for that which it imitates—Christian charity.

INTELLIGENCE WITHOUT VIRTUE

History affords many examples of the miserable results of intelligence without virtue. One of the intellectual giants of the world, a man of unsurpassed wisdom, whose philosophical writings are among our greatest treasures, whose abilities raised him to wealth, and the highest of dignities, and imperishable renown, was yet able to prove himself one of the basest of men. He was a self-seeker, a coward, a false friend, a monster of ingratitude, a perjured judge who sold his verdicts to the highest bidder, at once the admiration and the scorn of all mankind. In the Old Testament we read of Achitophel, whose "counsel which he gave in those days, was as if a man should consult God" (II Kings xvi, 23). His counsel was wicked, although wise; he fell into disgrace and died by his own hand. Solomon, again, was the wisest of men, but when he forgot the law of God he fell to the lowest depths of lust and idolatry, and we know not if he repented and saved his soul.—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD APPLIED TO THINGS SPIRITUAL

The wisdom of the world requires in the one who would win success at any of her shrines an intimate knowledge of his special craft. Should not this teach us that for spiritual growth we must seek out

a never satiated intimacy with the principles of the soul and the science of God? It is, in the world, the man who studies, the man who becomes thoroughly acquainted with the laws and rules prevalent in his special field of labour, that reaches the goal. So, no matter how shrewd we may be in seizing spiritual opportunities or how persistent in keeping the final object before our eyes, we must likewise study, to the extent that we can, the laws of the soul's life.

—Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.

OUR OPPORTUNITY

Men need to learn the great lesson of making the most of what they have close at hand. So many have the feeling that other conditions in life would make success more certain. We look away at distant fields, and think they are more green. The following is an illustration of this truth.

When Ali Hafid was sitting in his pleasant home, with his wealth of lands about him, his children brought to him a stranger, who showed him a diamond that shone like condensed sunshine. The traveler told him that one large diamond would be worth all his land and wealth. From that moment Ali Hafid was a poor man; for he was no longer contented, but longed for the glittering jewels. He arose in the morning, sold his land, and went away to search for diamonds: but in vain. At last, in rags and poverty, he returned to find that the person who had purchased his land, while digging in the stream at the foot of the garden found a shining gem which proved to be the first of the diamonds taken from the Golconda mines. Had Ali Hafid remained, to work in his own fields, the diamond would have been his.

So we often seek for our opportunity afar, and forget that right here, in our lowly tasks, in our drudgery even, are the opportunities for finding truest riches.

UNITED TO GOD

He who does not keep himself united to God by the exercise of His Holy Presence cannot succeed in what he undertakes for His glory.

—St. Vincent de Paul.

The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but Justice, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.—Rom. XIV, 17.

We have not here a lasting city, but we seek One that is to come.

—Heb. XIII, 14.

He that is just, let him be justified still; and he that is holy, let him be sanctified still.—Apoc. XXII, 11.

As the father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear Him.—Ps. CII, 13.

I have chosen you: and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit: and your fruit should remain.

—John XV, 16.

Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom: and to depart from evil is understanding.—Job XXVIII, 28.

He that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall.
—I *Cor.* X, 12.

Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth: where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal.—But lay up to yourselves treasures in Heaven: where neither rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.
—*Matt.* VI, 19-20.

By their fruits you shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?—Matt. VII, 16.

NATURAL PROBITY ESSENTIAL

On the other hand, we find that the neglect of natural opportunities of goodness raises up the chief barriers to the spread of Catholic truth. Those who do not prepare themselves while on the lower level of knowledge and grace, will never be able to see that light which is for the "revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of the people" (Luke ii, 32). Where natural probity does not exist, there is a deficiency in the raw material for the more perfect life; there also is wanting the depth of soil in which the seed can strike down its roots and flourish.—*Bishop Bellord.*

MAN DESIRES GOODNESS IN EVERYTHING EXCEPT IN HIS OWN WAY OF LIVING

Oh, the blindness and perverseness of man. All that he has he wants to be good; himself he doesn't want to be good. Who wants to have a farm that isn't good? or a wife that isn't good? or a house that isn't good? or even a pair of shoes that aren't good? As if bad shoes could hurt you more than a bad life! When your shoes are bad you mend them, or throw them away and get a new pair; your life you will not mend.—*St. Augustine.*

VIRTUES VS. VICES

Vice is a habit which is destroyed through being supplanted by another habit, which we call virtue. The Catholic Church singles out seven capital vices, the sources of other vices, and to them she applies seven corresponding virtues. A policeman can compel a loafer to move on, but he cannot create in him a desire for work. A judge can sentence a swindler to a term of imprisonment, but he cannot crush the passion of envy which is the source of all swindling. The Church, however, can touch the springs of the heart and can there implant her virtues. To the vice of pride she opposes the virtue of humility. To that of avarice she opposes liberality. To that of lust, charity. To anger, meekness. To gluttony and drunkenness, temperance. To envy, brotherly love. To sloth, diligence.
—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

So let your light shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, Who is in Heaven.—Matt. V, 16.

HEROIC VIRTUE

The elect numbers his days as those of a hireling; he reaches forward unto his prize, the more confident in hope, the more steadfastly he endures under the increase of toils. He watches the flowing away of this present time; he reckons up his days and his work; he fears that any movement of his lips should glide away without its appointed labour; he rejoices in adversity, he is restored by suffering, he is refreshed by sorrow, because he sees that he shall more largely be repaid by the rewards of the life to come, the more truly he renders himself up, for the love thereof, unto a daily death.

—*St. Gregory.*

SMALL VIRTUES MAKE GREAT SAINTS

St. Bonaventure declares: "Constant fidelity in small things is a heroic act." "The small virtues," says St. Francis de Sales, "make the great Saints."

OUR GLORY IN SIMPLE THINGS

To rule well our family, to edify our servants, to show justice and mercy, to do the good that God wishes us to do, and to bear patiently the trials that He sends us. Yet these practices of everyday Christian life Christ will praise on the last day before His Heavenly Father and the angels. Where then shall be the glory of the world?

—*Bossuet.*

THE ARMOUR OF GOD

Put ye on the armour of God, not merely to resist the enemy, but to assail him vigorously and overcome him. For what think ye? His attacks may be grievous to us, but more grievous to him our prayers. His wickedness and guile injure us, but far more do our simplicity and mercifulness torture him. He cannot endure our humility, he is burned by our charity and racked by our kindness and obedience.—*St. Bernard.*

CHASTITY

THE MEANS TO ATTAIN CHASTITY

Chastity is "a gift" of God (I Cor. vii, 7) which He refuses not to those who ask it "aright"; nor does He "suffer" us "to be tempted above that which" we "are able" (I Cor. x, 13).

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

THE BODY IS TO BE SUBDUED

The body is to be exercised, and the sensual appetites to be repressed not only by fastings, and particularly by the fasts instituted by holy Church, but also by watchings, pious pilgrimages and other austerities. By these and other such penitential observances is the virtue of temperance chiefly evinced; and to this effect St. Paul writes thus to the Corinthians: "Every one that striveth for the mastery, refraineth himself from all things; and they indeed that they may receive a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible one" (I Cor. ix, 25); and a little after: "I chastize my body, and bring it into subjection, lest, perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should

become reprobate" (I Cor. v, 27); in another place: "Make not provisions for the flesh in its concupiscence" (Rom. xiii, 14).
—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

THE MERIT OF CHASTITY

That the angels are angels is due to their nature, but that a virgin is a virgin is due to her virtue.—*St. Peter Chrysologus.*

BE WATCHFUL

Do not put confidence into your present chastity. You are not more saintly than David, nor wiser than Solomon. Do not forget that it was a woman who caused mankind to be expelled from paradise.—*St. Jerome.*

CHARITY AND CHASTITY

Charitable love, and undefiled chastity, are the two wings that carry us from earth to Heaven.—*St. Leo the Great.*

PURITY, NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL

Purity is a virtue natural and supernatural, loved by God and loved by man. God is purity in its perfection, purity itself. All that which proceeds from the immaculate hands of God is immaculately pure. Pure is the snow that falls from Heaven, pure is the lily that blossoms in the fields, pure are the rays of the sun that spread the purest light, pure is the air on the mountain tops before it descends in the valley. If thus the material creatures reflect the purity of God, how much more must the living spiritual images of God, the angels and the soul of man, enjoy this gift.—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

PURITY SOMETHING SACRED

Purity, virginity, is something sacred; something that touches every sound human heart, moves it profoundly and attracts it forcibly. God is purity. The heart of man is the image of God. It was made pure and was to remain thus forever. Man may lose this most precious gift, but he cannot easily lose his love and admiration for it; even as man, created free, may lose his liberty but not his longing for liberty. The corrupt pagans in corrupt Rome bowed their heads when passing the vestal virgins. This natural virtue received a supernatural splendour and glory through Jesus Christ and His blessed Mother.—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

Know you not that you are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?—But if any man violate the Temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the Temple of God is holy: which you are.—I *Cor.* III, 16-17.

I would that all men were even as myself: but every one hath his proper gift from God: one after this manner and another after that. —But I say to the unmarried, and to the widows: it is good for them if they so continue, even as I.—I *Cor.* VII, 7-8.

O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory! for the memory thereof is immortal, because it is known both with God and with

men.—When it is present, they imitate it: and they desire it when it hath withdrawn itself, and it triumpheth crowned for ever, winning the reward of undefiled conflicts.—Wisd. IV. 1-2.

He that loveth cleaness of heart, for the grace of his lips shall have the King for his friend.—Prov. XXII, 11.

OBEDIENCE

Obedience is the only virtue which implants the other virtues in the mind, and preserves them when they are implanted. Obedience is better than sacrifice: because by sacrifice the flesh of another is immolated, by obedience our own will is sacrificed to Almighty God. *—St. Gregory.*

One day as the Blessed Bonaventure was at work in the garden assisting his Superior, someone came to tell the latter that his presence was required in the monastery. This was in the early morning. Before leaving him the Superior said to Brother Bonaventure: "Remain here till I return; I will not be absent very long." But the business for which he had been called proved more serious than he had anticipated; it occupied him till the evening.

When at length he went to the refectory along with the other religious, he saw that the place usually occupied by Brother Bonaventure was empty. "Where is Brother Bonaventure?" he asked, "and why has he not come to supper?" "We do not know what has become of him," they answered. "Moreover, he was not here at dinner time." "May God forgive me," said the Superior; "perhaps he may still be standing in the garden in the place where I left him in the morning. Go in haste and see." They went, and found him there in the place where his Superior had told him to remain till he should return.

A young Sister of Charity was sitting weeping at the bedside of her dying father, the Count de Mornay. It was evident he had but a very short time to live. As she was watching and praying the clock struck the hour of eight; it was the hour when obedience required her to return to her convent. She instantly arose, and having impressed a farewell kiss on the brow of the beloved father, prepared to take her departure. A priest, who had been called in and who was kneeling in prayer beside the dying man, seeing her about to depart, said to her: "Sister, wait for a few moments longer, that you may be able to close his eyes, for the end is near." The pious sister answered the good priest in these simple words: "My Father, I cannot remain longer, for before all other things I must obey, even though it may cost me much to do so. Oh, how I desire to be with my beloved father when the hour has come for him to take his departure to God! but it is impossible for me to remain longer. The rule of our Order requires me to return to the convent at this time, and I must obey."

All the good which a creature is capable of doing is to accomplish the will of God, and we never accomplished it better than by obedience.—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

OBEDIENCE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EMOTION

The story is told of a young Evangelical who went up to his pastor and asked: "What does it feel like to be saved?" The pastor told him the signs. The young man waited and watched and prayed, but the signs never appeared. The waiting and watching and praying indeed ended in a crisis. The non-appearance of the Simeonite signs exasperated him. He said, "it's all one piece of humbug from beginning to end. I'm going to chuck religion." He did not, though. He simply started in his own natural way in his quest for the infinite. He read somewhere that Religion is Morality touched with Emotion. His old-fashioned bringing up gave him some sort of scheme of morality, but the emotion did not come—at any rate for some time. But when it did come it was not the emotion of buoyancy and peace, but that of depression and care. He was miserable. He tried new tacks all through life, but each one only brought a new disappointment. Whether he tried as he said to "chuck" morality or to repose in philosophy, sensible consolation did not come to him. He is pictured as dying and expecting it beyond the grave.

In the Catholic system of spirituality we are taught not to depend on emotion. Sensible feeling has its proper place in religion. The times of desolation are the times of trial and purgation. The times of consolation are, as it were, breathing spaces when the soul may gather rest—refreshment for still greater struggles and conquests. But the normal and ordinary life of the soul consists in doing the Will of God in so far as that Will is made known by Divine Revelation and interpreted by right reason. So long as the poor wayfarer is conscious that he is doing the right thing before God that is a sufficient sign to him that he is on the way of salvation. The presence or absence of emotional experience simply does not count as a sign of salvation.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

HOPE

WHAT IS HOPE?

Hope, in general, is the well-founded and confident expectation of some future good thing. Moreover, it is characteristic of hope that the thing hoped for should present some difficulty of attainment. We can scarcely be said to hope for a thing which without any effort or striving is sure to come into our possession. Again, what we hope for must be something possible of attainment. A poor workingman in one of our large cities or a country labourer will not look upon the idea of his becoming the Czar of all the Russias as one presenting any hope whatever of realization.—*H. G. Hughes.*

Blessed is the man whose trust is in the Name of the Lord: and who hath not had regard to vanities and lying follies.—*Ps.* XXXIX, 5

He that is good shall draw grace from the Lord: but he that trusteth in his own devices doth wickedly.—*Prov.* XII, 2.

They that hope in the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall take wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.—*Is.* XL, 31.

My son, in they sickness neglect not thyself, but pray to the Lord, and He shall heal thee.—Ecclus. XXXVIII, 9.

Trust in Him, all ye congregation of people; pour out your hearts before Him. God is our Helper for ever.—Ps. LXI, 9.

Put not your trust in princes: in the children of men, in whom there is no salvation.—Ps. CXLV. 2, 3.

The supernatural virtue of hope is not a positive assurance of attaining; it is a *desire, joined with confidence and expectation,* encouraging the soul to make the necessary effort; it presupposes that there are difficulties to be surmounted, and it prevents the soul from being cast down by them.—*Bishop Bellord.*

FAITH AND HOPE

It is my great consolation, that I have the faith that tells my reason that there is a Heaven; but it is far more consoling that I have the hope which tells my heart that a place in this Heaven is reserved for me.—*St. Bernard.*

HOPE IN GOD

Men may turn against me, sickness may take away my strength and the means of serving Thee, I may even lose Thy grace by sin, but I will never lose my hope. I will keep it even to the last moment of my life, and all the demons in hell shall try in vain to tear it from me. . . . In fine, I am sure that I can not hope too much in Thee, and that I can not obtain less than I hope for from Thee. Thus I hope that Thou wilt uphold me in the greatest dangers, protect me in the most violent assaults, and make my weakness triumph over my most formidable enemies. I hope that Thou wilt love me always, and that I shall also love Thee with unfailing love, and to carry my hope at once as far as it can go, I hope for Thee from Thyself, my Creator, both in time and in eternity.

—*Claude de la Colombière.*

THE EFFECTS OF HOPE

When faith has drawn aside the veil of ignorance, which concealed the Almighty from our view, it is incredible with what ardour the soul longs to attain a knowledge of the sovereign good which it beholds far distant, and to burst the bonds of its natural life. It exclaims, "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after Thee, O God. My soul hath thirsted after the strong, living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God?" (Ps. xli, 1-2). . . . The promises of God produce a wonderful effect in our souls; they diminish and dispel our uneasiness by strengthening the cause from which it proceeds. This is an undeniable truth. The Almighty, by holding out to us a promise of future happiness, increases our previous desire of enjoying it; and yet, the anxiety attendant on this desire is almost

destroyed by the promise. Calm and content are diffused into our hearts by the assurance which God adds to new desires.

—*St. Francis de Sales.*

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN "HOPING" AND "ASPIRING"

St. Francis de Sales gives the distinction between to *hope* and to *aspire*. He says: "We *hope* for things which it depends on others to bestow, and which we can not procure ourselves; we *aspire* to those which we can obtain by adopting certain measures. It is chiefly through the grace and mercy of God that we can hope for the enjoyment of His Divine Majesty, yet He requires that we should correspond with His grace by the feeble coöperation of our consent."

HOPE FOR THE SINNER

The greatest sinner can without doubt have sure hope if he will only turn to God and throw himself into the arms of the infinite compassion of his Heavenly Father, pleading for pardon through the precious Blood of Jesus. Hear what a holy soul, Sister Theresa of the Carmelite Order, known familiarly as the "Little Flower of Jesus," has to say on this point. She was a soul of intense purity and ardent charity, yet she declares that even had she been a great sinner, this would not have lessened her confidence in the great mercy of God. "It is not," she writes, "because I have been preserved from mortal sin that I raise myself up to God on the wings of confidence and love. Ah, I feel that even if I had on my conscience all the crimes that could be committed, I should not loose my confidence; I should go, my heart broken with sorrow, to throw myself into the arms of my Saviour. I know that He loves the prodigal son, I have heard His words to the Magdalene, to the adulterous woman, to the woman of Samaria. No! no one should frighten me, for I know how to rely on His love and His mercy. I know that all this multitude of offenses would be swallowed up in an instant like a drop of water thrown into a burning brazier."

—*H. G. Hughes.*

DISCOURAGEMENT NOT FAIR TO GOD

Discouragement is not fair to God, and it is not fair to ourselves.

First, it is not fair to God, for it is simply another name for want of confidence in Him, want of trust in His infinite fatherly love, and in the *unlimited* power of His holy Grace.

And if we are wanting in this confidence, we are really depriving God of some of the worship we owe Him, for we are bound to worship God by faith, and hope, and charity—and confidence, trust, is part of the Christian virtue of hope. Listen to some words written by the great Saint, Peter of Alcantara. They occur in a small treatise which he wrote for persons aiming at Christian perfection; and he is telling them how to act when they have fallen into any fault. After describing the faults to which such persons are liable, he says: "Should you have incurred all the miseries above described, and as many more as you please, one loving turn of the soul towards God prevails and gains more than all the sadness, reflection and examination imaginable concerning the fault or guilt, especially in venial and ordinary sins." . . . "Nay," he adds, "I will be bold

to go further and affirm that this loving confidence in God is necessary not only after venial and daily sins, but also after great ones, yea, though we sinned frequently and not through frailty, but malice; for contrition and affliction alone will not raise us up if we have not also this loving confidence and confiding love in the goodness and mercy of God."—*H. G. Hughes.*

CONFIDENCE IN GOD

Suppose a soul to be heavy-laden with sins, to have every possible fault and every imaginable defect, and to have tried, by every possible means and every kind of spiritual exercise, to forsake sin and to practice holiness. We will suppose this soul to have done all this, and yet to have failed in making the smallest advance in holiness, nay, on the contrary, to have been borne the more strongly towards evil.

For all this it must not lose its trust in God, nor give over its conflict, nor lay down its arms, but still fight on resolutely, knowing that none is vanquished in this spiritual combat but he who ceases to struggle and loses confidence in God, whose succour never fails his soldiers, though He sometimes permits them to be wounded. Fight on, then, valiantly; for on this depends the whole issue of the strife, for there is a ready and effectual remedy for the wounds of all combatants who look confidently to God and to His aid for help; and when they least expect it they shall see their enemies dead at their feet.—*Quadrupani.*

OH, YOU OF LITTLE FAITH!

How can the penitent be damned by Him who died to save mankind from damnation? How can the lost sheep be despised by Him who came to seek it? You may say I realize the merciful love of God, but my sins are too numerous and wicked, and my penitence is too weak, how can I be saved? O! you of little faith, do you not see what infinite satisfaction He has rendered for sin on the Cross? If your vices were even more wicked, and your sins more numerous, aye, as wicked as conceivable, the sacrifice on the Cross far exceeds them.—*St. Thomas of Villanova.*

ST. PHILIP NERI'S TRUST IN GOD

On rising from bed St. Philip Neri used to say every morning: "O Lord, keep thy hand this day over Philip; if Thou dost not Philip will betray Thee." And one day as he walked through the city reflecting on his own misery, he frequently said, "I despair, I despair." A certain religious who heard him, believing that the Saint was really tempted to despair, corrected him, and encouraged him to hope in the Divine mercy. But the Saint replied, "I despair of myself, but I trust in God."

PROPER RECOURSE TO HUMAN MEANS

The Lord does not forbid us, in our afflictions and dangers, to have recourse to human means; but he curses those who place their whole trust in them.—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

IF GOD DROVE!

Two boys were talking together of Elijah's ascent in the chariot of fire. Said one: "Wouldn't you be afraid to ride in such a chariot?" "No," said the other, "not if God drove!" God drives the chariot of human progress, and it mounts as it advances. God is in His world, and if we make sure that He is with us we shall not be afraid.

"MY FATHER IS AT THE RUDDER!"

A ship was caught in a vehement storm. The waves were rolling high and threatened to engulf the reeling vessel in its mighty depths. The passengers were in despair, their faces pale with fear. Only a young lad showed no signs of alarm; with calm defiance he watched the uproar of the elements. And, asked if he did not fear the storm, he answered with naïve assurance: "No, my father is at the rudder!" What a sublime confidence, what ingenuous trust, of the child in his father! He fears nothing in his presence; he believes in his readiness and ability to help. And we have greater reasons for unlimited confidence in God.—*Charles Bruehl.*

THE HOPELESSNESS OF OUR AGE

Few things are more characteristic of our age than its hopelessness, its despair. The world is stricken with morbidity, restlessness, and discontent. No one conversant with modern thought can fail to be struck by the note of pessimism which seems to dominate it all. The air is full of passionate cries of rage and disappointment, cries that are rich in menace for the peaceful continuance of society. Revolt is the order of the day; and revolt is like a drug, the more you take the more you need, until the system is undermined and death mercifully supervenes. Very decidedly ours is not a joyful age. Its only idea of joy is license and licentiousness; and it may be boldly asserted that the hectic joy of the licentious is in reality the saddest and most tragic thing in the life of man. When all the sources of natural, wholesome, holy happiness are exhausted, or choked or poisoned, then men crown their heads with roses, and fill their cups with wine, and try to kill the impracticable hours, try to chase dull care and escape the lawful ennui which preys upon all whose hearts are not unlifted by some higher hope.

Christianity first taught men the secret of real, abiding happiness. It dissipated the heavy gloom that lay upon the ancient world. It gave life a meaning, labour a sanctity, poverty a dignity, and suffering a sweetness. It did not put, and never was intended to put, an end to the thousand natural ills that flesh is heir to; but it gave men motives for facing these bravely, and enduring them, not only with patience, but even with gladness. Its message was a good message, or rather *the* good message of all time, and it set the hearts of men pulsating to a heavenly music quite unknown before.

—*P. J. Gannon, S. J.*

A patient man shall bear for a time, and afterwards joy shall be restored to him.—Ecclus. I, 29.

RESIGNATION

RESIGNATION

But if thou knowest that it will be hurtful to me, and not expedient for the salvation of my soul, take away from me such a desire. For every desire is not from the Holy Ghost, though it seem to a man right and good. And it is sometimes hard to judge truly, whether it be a good or bad spirit that urges thee on to desire this or that, or whether thou art not moved to it by thy own spirit. Many in the end have been deceived, who at first seemed to be led by a good spirit.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

My son, say thus, on every occasion: Lord, if it be pleasing to Thee let this be done in this manner. Lord, if it be to Thy honour let this be done in Thy name. Lord, if Thou seest that this is expedient, and approvest of it, as profitable for me, then grant that I may use it to Thy honour.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE MERIT OF RESIGNATION

The sick sometimes complain that in sickness they can do nothing: but they err; for in their infirmities they can do all things by accepting their sufferings with peace and resignation. "The Cross of Christ," says St. John Chrysostom, "is the key of Paradise."

—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

One day there came to Heaven a little soul unknown to the world. During its trial on earth it had not done anything extraordinary, for it had occupied an humble place in the world, and had only to do those things which fall to the lot of the poor. Yet the good God assigned to it a very glorious place in Heaven, and there was astonishment among the great Saints, who, in their day of trial, had done and suffered so much for God. All looked towards the Angel Guardian who had brought in this beautiful soul. The angel bowed before God to obtain permission to speak, and from his lips there fell these words: "This soul, when on earth, always took what God sent it, sunshine or toil, sorrow or joy, and never complained. Whatever God sent was always welcome, and it never questioned why He did what He did, but always thought that God knew best. And God, who knew and saw every act of its life, now rewards it with this great glory."—*L. Veuillot.*

One act of resignation to God's will, in all that it has ordained contrary to our desires, is more valuable than a hundred thousand sacrifices conformable to our own will and taste.—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

But they that love Jesus for Jesus' sake, and not for any comfort of their own, bless Him no less in tribulation and anguish of heart than in the greatest consolation.

And if He should never give them His comfort, yet would they always praise Him, and give Him thanks.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

GOD'S WILL *IS* DONE

Those who in certain affairs find it difficult to say sincerely "Thy will be done," may find a help in saying "Thy will *is* done."

It is the Lord: let Him do what is good in His sight.
—I *Kings* III, 18.

Shall not my soul be subject to God? for from Him is my salvation.—Ps. LXI, 2.

If thou lose hope being weary in the day of distress, thy strength shall be diminished.—Prov. XXIV, 10.

I beseech Thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is pleasing before Thee.—IV *Kings* XX, 3.

Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. Thy Good Spirit shall lead me into the right Land.—Ps. CXLII, 10.

Good things and evil, life and death, poverty and riches, are from God.—Ecclus. XI, 14.

If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.—Luke XIV, 26.

PATIENCE IN PERSECUTION

St. Bernardine was one day, according to the rules of his Order, passing along the streets of Siena collecting alms for his monastery. He was accompanied by one of his brethren. Some wicked men, who met the good religious, took up stones and threw them at them. His companion was very much grieved at this cruel treatment, and asked the Saint to speak to them so that they might go away. But he gaily answered: "Oh no, my brother; let them torment us as long as they please; they are teaching us how to practice the great virtue of meekness, and are giving us an opportunity of gaining much merit for the Kingdom of Heaven by our patience."

BEARING PERSECUTION FOR THE SAKE OF CHRIST

St. Vincent of Paul was frequently calumniated, but he never tried to justify himself. One of the priests under his care said to him one day, when some person had spoken untruly of him: "Father, why do you not justify yourself, since you are so falsely accused?" "My brother," was his reply, "I will try to justify myself by my works, but never by my words."

Another day, when he was speaking to the Queen, she told him that he had been accused to her of a certain fault of which she knew that he could not be guilty. The Saint, without the least sign of disappointment, said: "Madam, I know I am a great sinner." "But you are innocent of this sin; why, then, do you not endeavour to

justify yourself?" St. Vincent answered: "Jesus Christ was calumniated more than I have been, yet He did not try to justify Himself, neither will I."

Whatsoever shall befall the just man, it shall not make him sad: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.—Prov. XII, 21.

The God of all grace, who hath called us unto His Eternal Glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little, will Himself perfect you, and confirm you and establish you. To Him be glory and empire for ever and ever, amen.—I Peter V, 10.

I reckon that the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us.
—Rom. VIII, 18.

Blessed is the man whom God correcteth: refuse not therefore the chastizing of the Lord.—Job V, 17.

They that did not receive the trials with the fear of the Lord, but uttered their impatience and the reproach of their murmuring against the Lord,—Were destroyed by the destroyer, and perished by serpents.
—Judith VIII, 24-25.

I *will chastize thee in judgment that thou mayst not seem to thyself innocent.—Jer.* XXX, 11.

ADVERSITIES

AFFLICTIONS

If you were walking toward the brink of an abyss, and some one were to roughly seize you and fling you to the earth, his action, though startlingly rude and apparently hostile, would be a real kindness. If you were entering a train which you thought was going to your home, but which would in reality take you hundreds of miles away from it, any one who should lay hold of you and prevent you from so doing would be rightly regarding you as a friend and not as an enemy. If you were about to sign a deed that would utterly ruin your worldly prospects, and one who knew this were to strike the pen from your hand, you would be profuse in your thanks. Now these are the benefits which God confers upon you by sending you these apparent evils. Therefore, do not regard them as evils, but as blessings in disguise. Consequently, never murmur against them. This must be your earnest resolve. You do not murmur against those who give you wise but unpalatable advice. It is disagreeable at first, but your good sense eventually approves of it, and you accept it. Lastly, you must never say, "Why does God afflict me so?" Compared with God, you are but as a child compared with its parents. A child often cries, laments, and it is grievously troubled because it is not allowed to do what it pleases—to play, for instance, with fire, to handle a razor, to eat what would be injurious. The parents see the

danger and prevent it; the child, however, is, for the moment, grieved; but it is saved from wounds, from sickness, perhaps from death. By acting thus you will be led on a safe path to the heavenly kingdom, and there, in the fruition of eternal beatitude, you will thank God for sending you these blessings in disguise, blessings which have arrested you in a career that might have ended disastrously, which have led you to an intimate union with your God, and caused you to practice virtues which He will crown with the never-fading glory of Heaven.

—*F. C. Doyle, O. S. B.*

Thou, My servant Jacob, fear not, saith the Lord: because I am with thee, for I will consume all the nations to which I have cast thee out: but thee I will not consume, but I will correct thee in judgment, neither will I spare thee as if thou wert innocent.—*Jer.* XLVI, 28.

My son, reject not the correction of the Lord: and do not faint when thou art chastized by Him.—For whom the Lord loveth, He chastizeth: and as a father in the son He pleaseth Himself.

—*Prov.* III, 11-12.

SUFFER WITH CHRIST

Christ was also in this world despised by men, and in His greatest necessity forsaken by His acquaintances and friends, in the midst of reproaches. Christ would suffer and be despised; and dost thou dare to complain of any one?—*Thomas à Kempis.*

Oh, friend, what is there that can happen to you that your Saviour did not suffer before you? Is it slander? He heard it, when He was called a glutton, a drunkard, a heretic, and a rebel, a companion of sinners, one possessed by the devil.—*St. Augustine.*

LIFE NOT COMPLETE WITHOUT THE CROSS OF SACRIFICE

As one stands in the city of Cologne and looks up at that world-famed cathedral, he is at first impressed with the feeling that there is something about the beautiful pile that is not finished. As the eye follows the work upward from the base, taking in the solid blocks first one and then another, and then examines the beautiful tracery so delicately wrought and so richly displayed, one feels that there is an incompleteness about it all; until, standing farther off, the whole structure, seen, as it were at a single glance, presents a union of all the parts, and our sense of finished beauty is satisfied. Instinctively the eyes of the beholder creep up from one incompleteness to another, till they rest upon the all-surmounting cross.

No life is made complete till it is surrounded by the cross of sacrifice, which is the symbol of love.

OTHERS SUFFER MORE THAN YOU!

Solon, the pagan sage of Athens, once had a friend who was deeply distressed by misfortune that had struck him. Solon took the friend to the peak of a mountain overlooking Athens and thus spoke to him: "My friend, I duly appreciate that you have good reason for sorrow, but remember you are not the only one afflicted with misery. Behold this city and its many dwellings! How much misery and sad-

ness is within them in comparison to which your adversities are but small. Calm yourself, therefore, and remember that you are neither the first nor the only one who is made to suffer." The friend appreciated the truth of these words and went forth resigned to his fate.

AFFLICTION BRINGS GRACE

And the more the flesh is brought down by affliction, the more the spirit is strengthened by inward grace.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE CROSS EVERYWHERE

Thou canst not escape it, whithersoever thou runnest; for whithersoever thou goest, thou carriest thyself with thee, and shalt always find thyself.

Turn thyself upwards, or turn thyself downwards; turn thyself without, or turn thyself within thee, and everywhere thou shalt find the Cross.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

AFFLICTIONS A BLESSING

When we receive the afflictions which God sends us, with entire and perfect resignation, they become great blessings in our regard as conformity to God's will is an advantage far superior to all temporal gains.—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

If the world hate you, know ye, that it hath hated Me before you.
—*John* XV, 18.

JOY IN AFFLICTION

All through the Christian ages, the miraculous paradox of transcendent joy amid great afflictions is presented by the servants of God. When the young mother, St. Perpetua, returned to her prison from the judgment seat where she had heard her condemnation, she wrote: "Our sentence is that we are to be exposed to wild beasts, and we have come back to our prisons with our hearts thrilling with joy." St. Francis Xavier, amid his wanderings and his poverty, his unceasing labors and his feeble health, says: "I prayed to God to restrain the overflowing fullness of the joy that constantly overflow my soul." And again and again the poor ragged wanderer, St. Francis of Assisi, exclaims at the goodness of God and the joys that overwhelm his heart.—*Francis Harvey.*

HUMAN SORROW A MEANS OF PERFECTION

Our Lord showed Divine wisdom in not abolishing sorrow, in making sorrow of some sort part of the experience of every man. For it is human sorrow which strengthens our character, hardens our resolution, elevates our purpose in life, and broadens our sympathies. The man who has not had his character strengthened, his resolution hardened, his purpose in life elevated, his sympathies broadened, is but the outward semblance of a man; he is a mere human butterfly, fluttering aimlessly about from flower to flower as long as the sunshine lasts, and swept helplessly away by the first rain cloud that bursts over him. It would have been a poor service to humanity to have abolished that which more than anything else serves to perfect human nature.—*W. D. Strappini, S. J.*

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them.—In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure was taken for misery.—And their going away from us, for utter destruction: but they are in peace.—And though in the sight of men they suffered torments, their hope is full of immortality.—Wisd. III, 1-4.

A grievous sickness maketh the soul sober.—Ecclus. XXXI, 2.

Come to Me, all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you.—Matt. XI, 28.

Through many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of God.—Acts. XIV, 21.

All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will not cast out.—John VI, 37.

SUFFERING WHOLESOME

The Almighty, in sending us suffering, whether little or great, is only doing to us that which we take care to do to our own children. How foolish would the conduct of an adult be who, so soon as the tears of a child begin to flow at a task set him at school, concludes that all schools are places of torture and that they who insist on seeing that their little ones are educated must be without any of the milk of human kindness. We know that the lad who daily has to submit to the routine of school life has very decided views to the effect that the acquisition of knowledge is a painful matter in the process. In case of the dull scholar is becames even worse than painful.—*John Freeland.*

SUFFERING

There are two possible ways, either you are righteous and tested, or you are a sinner and then you suffer less than you ought to.—*St. Jerome.*

PATIENCE IN SUFFERING

Of St. Philip Neri it is said that in his last and painful illness he used to say frequently: "Dear Lord, increase my pain but also my patience."

THE WORLDLY VIEW OF SUFFERING

The view current in the world about suffering is misleading and dangerous, it is both irrational and irreligious. It may lead men to make more strenuous efforts to overcome suffering, but it makes them less capable of enduring it, and perhaps causes their efforts to be misdirected and wasted. The world puts suffering in the place that belongs to sin, regarding it as the supreme evil to be combated at any cost, as the great enemy of mankind, as a thing in which there is no particle of good or any mitigating circumstances. The things that the world values and seeks are ease, pleasure, refinement, abundance, sweetness and light, and so on. What place have pain and

want in such a scheme of life as this? What need is there, for the world's purposes, of virtues such as patience, resignation, meekness, contentment, faith? It does not want to know about suffering or to make provision for it. If any fall under the dominion of sorrow, let them drop out of the general stream of life and suffer silently without obtruding on the enjoyment of others.—*Bishop Bellord.*

OUR STRENGTH IN SUFFERING

There is not one of us, however weak and timid he may be, who, if called upon to pass through the furnaces of trial, cannot do so with a song of triumph on his lips, because the joy of God's service is welling in our hearts. It is narrated that when a community of nuns, in Paris, during the horrors of the French Revolution, which included innocence and purity in its destruction of crime and oppression, were condemned to the guillotine, the young sisters passed through the storm-swept streets, where terror reigned supreme, to the place of their doom, raising in serene voices the sublime hymn, *"Veni Creator spiritus"* ("Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest"). Never before, the listeners thought, had that anthem of majestic praise been so Divinely sung,—so much as if the chant of Heaven itself had floated down and mingled with the melody. The celestial song did not cease when they ascended the stairs of the scaffold and the work of butchery went on. Voice after voice had to drop from the chorus as face after face bent under the axe; and at length one voice was heard alone sustaining the holy strain, with no faltering or cadence, even while the bloody blade fell and sealed the last martyr's testimony. Over scaffolds and through blood, beset by slow sufferings and sharp tortures, may be the march of the army of the Lord, but we will be sustained by the rations of His joy, and look gladly forward to His promised gift when the night cometh and we lay down our arms in the camp of Heaven.

—*Francis Harvey.*

ADVERSITY

Does a physician prescribe bitter medicine to the patient out of hatred? No he only hates the sickness.—*St. Augustine.*

The living fish swims against the tide, a dead fish floats with the tide. This may be applied to the spiritual life or spiritual death of man.—*St. Augustine.*

The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and shall come into Sion with praise, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

—*Is.* XXXV, 10.

God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away.—*Apoc.* XXI, 4.

If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.—*Matt.* XVI, 24.

ADVERSITY MANIFESTS VIRTUE

A good pilot proves himself in a tempest; a good soldier on the battle-field; a good Christian in adversity.—*St. Cyprian.*

THE USES OF ADVERSITY

Sufferings and adversities are an excellent and beneficial remedy, but they may also be turned into poison. To the faithful Israelites the rivers of Egypt yielded pure water, whereas the Egyptians found nothing but blood in them; though they were the same rivers yet they yielded different things to different people.

—*St. John of the Cross.*

TRIALS

There was once a holy man, who spent his life in the midst of great spiritual consolations. He was always happy, and seemed to have none of those temptations which are so common in this world. One day he was reading the holy Scriptures, and saw there that Jesus Christ had said that if we desire to be His disciples, we must take up our cross and follow Him. "I have no crosses," he said; "I never had any. I seem to be living more like the angels of God in Heaven than like one on trial on earth. O my God," he cried out, "take away from me these favours Thou art daily heaping upon me, if Thou seest that I shall be more pleasing to Thee without them." God heard his prayer. For the next five years he was continually tormented with temptations, and during all that time he received no consolations from Heaven. In his prayers, too, he felt no fervour, and his life was embittered by continual sorrow. One day as he was weeping bitterly over his sad condition two angels appeared to him. "God has sent us to console you," they said. "He is pleased with what you have done for Him, and if you so desire it, He will put an end to all your afflictions, and give you back again the peaceful happiness of former days." But he answered: "No; I do not desire any consolation. It is enough for me that the holy Will of God be accomplished in me; I seek nothing else." The angels then left him. To the end of his long life he had to endure the same afflictions and the same bitter trials. But now they are all ended, and he is with God in Heaven, in possession of that eternal joy which God has promised to all who do His holy Will on earth.

A father had a child whom he loved with all the tenderness of a father's heart. The child became very ill, and the physician ordered some very bitter medicine to be given him. The child refused to take it because it was so bitter, but his father commanded him to take it, and even used force to compel him to swallow it. A neighbour, who heard the cries of the child, came into the house, and saw the father administering the medicine. "Oh, cruel man!" he cried out, "take pity on the child. Do not make him suffer in that way." But the father turned towards him and said with anger: "Be silent! Do you think that I would cause my darling child to suffer in this way if it were not for his good, and necessary for

his recovery? No; it is because I love him so dearly that I am forcing him to do what is so disagreeable."

It is in this way that our Heavenly Father treats us when He sends us trials, for it is one of the surest signs that He loves us.

THE DIVINE EXAMPLE

Let us frequently call to mind that as our Lord has saved us by patient sufferings, so we also ought to work out our salvation by sufferings and afflictions; enduring injuries and contradictions with all possible meekness.—*St. Francis de Sales.*

THE TREASURE IN THE CROSS

There is a tender and beautiful story, which tells of the inheritance of a wooden cross by a poor French girl, raised by a noble lady, who, at death, in bequeathing her treasures to her friends, left the girl the cross over which she had always prayed. It was a cross of carved wood, not particularly beautiful, but to the tender heart of that girl associated with her benefactress's love and character. And so she took it thankfully, and, as she had seen the lady do, she prayed over that wooden cross. It was in the later years of her life, when misfortune had come upon her family, when her husband had been stricken helpless upon a bed of disease, her children had met with illness, and the household had grown very poor, so that there was no comfort and hardly the means to live before them, little after little their prosperity had gone, and the ease of their life had been withdrawn, that it seemed to her as if she had no treasure but that cross. As she prayed over it one day, her tears mingling with her prayers, the cross broke open. She had touched some secret spring, and lo! it was but a wooden casket in the shape of a cross, and inside, blazing with splendour, and of almost priceless value, lay a cross of diamonds and gold.

The crosses which we sometimes inherit and which seem so hard to bear, often have hidden within them the greatest treasures of life and eternity.

THE FOUNTAIN OF CONSOLATION

"They shall be comforted." But that comforting is so far away. What will become of us in this long weary life? Will it be all misery? Nothing to cheer us and gladden our days? No immediate solace? Only pale hope of some future reward? It seems all so discouraging, so cheerless, so dreary! My friends, it is not that way. In the midst of the waters of bitterness will gush forth a sweet fountain of consolation. As the thornbush has its blossoms, so the very misfortunes of life bring with them their own sweet joys. St. Chrysostom already has answered the impatient query of the downcast sufferer in this very same way: "Where shall they be comforted? Tell me. Both here and there. For since the thing enjoined was exceeding burdensome and galling, He promised to give that which most of all made it light. For when God doth comfort, though sorrows come upon thee by thousands like snowflakes, thou wilt be above them all" (*Hom. on St. Matt., xv,* 4).—*Charles Bruehl.*

GOOD WORKS

THE BENEFIT DERIVED FROM GOOD WORKS

A monk one day thus addressed his superior: "What is the use of my going to hear sermons? I can never recall what has been said." In order to convince him that he always gained some benefit from what he heard, the superior commanded him to take one of two baskets and bring him water from the river. The monk was much surprised, but nevertheless he obeyed without a murmur. Three times the command was repeated, and three times the holy man returned with the basket as empty as before. Then the superior asked him what difference he detected between the basket he had tried to fill with water and the one that had been left untouched. "None," replied the monk, "except that the one I carried to the river looks cleaner than the other." "Just so," answered the superior; "as the basket, despite the fact that it could not retain the water, became cleaner, so your soul, though perhaps unable to retain all the instruction you have received, yet derives benefit from every sermon."

—*Frederick Reuter.*

INTENTION ALL-IMPORTANT

There is an ancient legend relating how to a sick boy there appeared one night an angel, standing by the boy's bedside. The child was not in the least afraid, for the angel appeared in a gentle form and said to him: "My little playfellow, what will you give me if I cure your sickness?" The lad, thinking what was his most precious treasure, said, "I will give you my ten marbles." The angel smiled and said, "For that I will gladly make you well"; and in the morning the fever vanished, and the boy rose and went forth to his play, perfectly restored.

The treasures which we offer up to God are not estimated for their intrinsic value, but for what they seem worth to us.

A certain priest, belonging to a religious Order, had acquired great fame by the learned books he had written. One day, a lay brother approached him and said "Oh, dear father, what great reward will be yours in Heaven on account of the great good which your beautiful books are doing," but the priest said to him: "Dear brother, on judgment day the work I do with my books and the work you do with your broom will have the same value, as long as we both do the work for the greater honour of God. Indeed, if, in sweeping, your intention and devotion was more perfect and more pleasing to God than my intention and devotion in writing books, your reward will be greater than the one I can hope for."

It is related that a great Saint was one day playing a game of ball. In the midst of the game one of his companions said: "I wonder what we would do if we were to die this minute." One answered: "I would kneel down and say my prayers." Another said: "I would immediately go to Confession." A third ventured "I would run to the nearest church." As it was now the Saint's turn to speak, he smilingly said: "And I would just go on with my game." The others exclaimed in surprise: "Oh! father, how could you prepare yourself

to die that way?" But the Saint quietly made answer: "I began this game with the intention of pleasing God, and, therefore, I am doing what is most agreeable to Him."—*Frederick Reuter.*

In the convent where St. Gertrude lived there were many pious young ladies who were always busy at work, and did much more than St. Gertrude, who was not strong in body. But the Saint gained more merit before God for the little she did than all the others, although they did more. The reason of this was because she did everything for the love of God, while they did many of their actions from some other motive. So they lost their reward for them; for God does not give any recompense for anything that is not done for Him.

LITTLE WORKS COUNT

My children, perhaps you will never have it in your power to do great works for God, but little ones you can perform every day of your lives. He who lays a brick upon a building, each succeeding day, will soon complete a large house. Do some good, therefore, every moment of your lives.—*St. Francis de Sales.*

THE RUSE OF THE DEVIL

The devil will often endeavour to hinder us from doing a good work by suggesting one which is greater, but in the end, by means of fresh obstacles, he will manage to prevent its accomplishment.

—*St. Ignatius.*

GOD REQUIRES OUR ENDEAVOUR

God does not require bodily strength from us, but a sincere disposition to seize the opportunities of serving Him according to His will and His designs in our regard. He requires a real desire of suffering, even martyrdom if it were His good pleasure.

—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

VAIN COMPLACENCY IN DOING GOOD

Vain complacency is the poison of good works if it enter into them. It is a plague which infects the most holy actions, and makes us speedily forget God. It is a vice most fatal to all progress in the spiritual life and perfection.—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

THE FORCE OF EXAMPLE

We all of us, I suppose, know how much personal influence can effect. We are instinctively swayed by the actions or examples of those with whom we live. The man or woman of strong character can change for good or evil the whole current of our lives. The constant cheap sneer at goodness, humility, or faith; the open revolt against the laws of morality or of religion; the unblushing selfishness, the thirst for drink or the passion for money or applause, that we see around us, drive us unconsciously to imitation; while, on the other hand, thanks be to God! the lives of devotion and meekness, purity and unselfishness, humility, and unobtrusive, though untiring goodness, child-like faith and trust; such lives, led by thousands, both inside and outside the visible Church, mould and influence (who can doubt it?) the actions and characters of multitudes whom they have never known.—*W. R. Carson.*

An old general was one day asked by a friend, how it was that after spending so many years in camp, he yet persevered in frequent Communion. His friend deemed camp life not conducive to the upbuilding of religious principles. But the general answered, "My friend, would you believe that the strangest thing of it all is that my conversion was brought about before I ever heard the word of a priest? When my campaign was over, God gave me a pious wife whose faith I respected but did not share. Before I married her, she was a member of the Sodality of the Children of Mary in her parish, and I noticed that, no matter what she was writing, she never failed to add to her signature 'Child of Mary.' After our marriage, she never took it upon herself to lecture me about God, but she did not cease her prayers, nevertheless. Night and morning saw her on her knees, and when she came home from Mass on Sundays, there was a quiet sweetness about her, so that to me she seemed like an angel. Suddenly I myself was attracted by the God she loved so well. I desired to know more of Him, and soon, I, who had been a complete stranger to the practice of religion, sought my wife and said to her 'Take me to your confessor.' That was the beginning of my conversion, my friend."—*Frederick Reuter.*

THE REASONABLE WORSHIP OF GOD

The "reasonable worship" of which St. Paul speaks means *giving* something to God. It means, in his words, "presenting our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing unto God." If in this life we be not recreant to our Christian vocation, our occupation for eternity will be the worship of God. Like the seraphim whom Isaias beheld in the Temple, we shall sing day and night: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts;" like the ancients whom St. John saw in vision, we shall fall down in adoration before the Lamb of God, who sitteth upon the throne. Heaven is a place of sublime and endless worship. There God is adored without ceasing by all the angels and Saints who form His court. What, then, would those do in such company, who ever grudged God a few moments of prayer and worship? What pleasure could there be in the choirs of angels for those whose hearts are alienated from Him and who have no relish for His service? What better preparation can we make, then, to fit ourselves for the work of Heaven than by learning to engage in and to love its work on earth?—*J. W. Sullivan.*

PRAYER

LOVE OF PRAYER

St. Francis Borgia spent eight hours every day in prayer; he would willingly have spent a longer time, but his superiors would not allow him. When the eight hours were done, and when they came to tell him that the time granted him for prayer was ended, he would earnestly ask them, in the Name of Jesus Christ, to give him a few minutes more. This is how the Saints loved prayer. How different were they from many who think themselves to be

good Christians and yet feel even a quarter of an hour in on day very long, and become anxious to reach the end of thei prayer as soon as possible!

CONVERSING WITH GOD

In the village of Ars, not long ago, there lived a poor man wh was very ignorant in the learning of the world, but was every da gaining great merit for Heaven by his simple faith. Whenev that good man was going to his work or coming home from i he was sure to be seen entering the church to adore his Divine Lor in the holy tabernacle. He would leave his tools, his spade, ho and pickaxe at the door, and remain for hours together sitting o kneeling before the tabernacle. The priest of the place, the Blesse Curé of Ars, watched him with great delight. But what surprise him was, that although the man remained so long in the churc he never moved his lips, and kept his eyes fixed on the tabernac all the time.

One day the priest said to him: "My good man what do you sa to Our Lord in those long visits you pay to Him every day?" Th man answered: "I say nothing to Him; I look at Him, and H looks at me." Prayer does not consist in saying many words, but i having your mind fixed on God.

MORNING PRAYER

What can be more fitting, what more obvious in its fittingnes than that our first waking thoughts should be directed to tha Heavenly Father under whose protection we have rested during th night? Oh, sinners! You who lie down night after night to fa into that unconsciousness which is the very image of death— pause to ask you if there are any such here—how do you dare You, rebels against God, deserving of His wrath, at enmity wit Him, you are obliged to put yourselves, whether you will or no into His hands for many hours, the dark hours of the night. Wak ing, you may think that your own watchfulness may save you fro harm, from accident, from death—though in truth it is not so unles He wills it to be so—but sleeping, what avail your powers? The are for the time being as dead.—*H. G. Hughes.*

NIGHT PRAYER

Now is the dead of night, and I must sleep;
But first, my soul, if thou dost aught recall
Wherein thou hast done ill, I bid thee weep,
And pray God's tender mercy on the fall;
Be all for Heaven; think life draws near the close;
Give to repentance thy last conscious breath;
For more and more this mortal weakness grows
That pledges thee to take the form of death,
And sleep awhile. What if in dreams the doom
Of life should shut, and thou return no more?

—*Caryl Battersby (Non-Cath.)*

PERSEVERANCE

PERSEVERANCE

To lay a foundation for a house is but the first step. It takes much time, trouble, and expenditure to finish the house, thus it is with our spiritual structure. To lay only the foundation will not do us any good, we must persevere in building it up.—*St. Theresa.*

With a Christian, not the beginning but the end is what is important. St. Paul had a bad beginning, but a good end. Judas had a good beginning but a bad end.—*St. Jerome.*

Our perseverance depends, not on one grace, but on the thousand helps which we hope to obtain from God during our whole lives, that we may be preserved in His grace. Now to this chain of graces a chain of prayers on our part must correspond, and without these prayers, God ordinarily does not grant His graces. If we neglect to pray, and thus break the chain of prayers, the chain of graces shall also be broken, and we shall lose the grace of perseverance.
—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

Know you not that they that run in the race all run indeed, but one receiveth the prize? So run that you may obtain.
—I *Cor.* IX, 24.

A holy man continueth in wisdom as the sun: but the fool is changed as the moon.—Ecclus. XXVII, 12.

He that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved.
—*Matt.* X, 22.

Be thou faithful until death: and I will give thee the Crown of Life.—And he that shall overcome and keep My works unto the end, I will give him power over the nations.—And he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and as the vessel of a potter, they shall be broken.—Apoc. II, 10, 26-27.

Behold they that serve Him are not steadfast, and in His Angels He found wickedness.—Job IV, 18.

Be steadfast in the way of the Lord and in the truth of thy judgment, and in knowledge, and let the word of peace and justice keep with thee.—Ecclus. V, 12.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith.—As to the rest, there is laid up for me a Crown of Justice, which the Lord the Just Judge will render to me in that day; and not only to me, but to them also that love His coming.
—II *Tim.* IV, 7-8.

TEMPTATION

TEMPTATION NECESSITATED BY FREE WILL

Even shortsighted as we are, we see in the very nature of things the necessity and advantages of temptation or trial. Free will necessitates temptation. How can we be selected, chosen, judged or rewarded, if not tried by temptation? The whole theory of evolution is but "the survival of the fittest," in a struggle with adversity which fits in very well with "our wrestling, that is, not with flesh and blood, but with the powers of darkness in high places." God never meant us to loll away our lives in "a castle of indolence"; but through many tribulations, "to fight our way to the kingdom of Heaven." Life is the soul's training ground, and temptations serve to test our fitness to "spring up into eternal life." As well hope to turn out a scholar, a soldier, or an athlete, without trial or training as to make a soul truly Christian and supernatural without temptation. Winter's snow and frost and rain are as beneficial in nature as summer's heat. The storm has its uses, as well as the calm. So with temptations, they deepen and strengthen the soul in virtue. "What doth he know that hath not been tried," says the wise man (Ecclus xxxiv, 9).—*William Graham.*

TEMPTATIONS NECESSARY FOR THE PRACTICE OF VIRTUES

A young monk one day went to visit a venerable abbot. As they were speaking of spiritual things, the monk said: "My Father, there was a time when I was much troubled with temptations, but thanks be to God, I am never troubled with them now." The abbot asked him how he had been able to become free from them. "I prayed to God that He would never permit me to be tempted again, and He has been pleased to hear my prayer." The abbot answered: "My son, you have done a very foolish thing. Go back quickly, and pray to God again to send you temptations, but along with them to give you the grace necessary to overcome them. If you have no temptations to fight against, you may easily become careless in the practice of virtue, and so may fall into the sin of sloth."

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been proved, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which God hath promised to them that love Him.—*James* I, 12.

My brethren, count it all joy, when you shall fall into divers temptations;—Knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience.—*James* I, 2-3.

Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon the whole world to try them that dwell upon the earth.—*Apoc.* III, 10.

Let no man, when he is tempted, say that he is tempted by God. For God is not a tempter of evils, and He tempteth no man.
—*James* I, 13

He that is temperate shall prolong life.—Ecclus. XXXVII, 34.

Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not into temptation.
—*Matt.* XXVI, 41.

CONCUPISCENCE THE SOURCE OF TEMPTATION

A man is never entirely secure from temptation as long as he lives; because we have within us the source of temptation, having been born in concupiscence.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

DIVINE JUSTICE AND MERCY

If the devil troubles me by the idea of Divine justice, I think of mercy; if he seeks to lead me to presumption by the idea of mercy, I think of justice.—*St. Ignatius.*

THE ARCH-ENEMY

Scarcely a truth in Holy Scripture is more plainly written on its pages than this: that we have an enemy: a living, real, personal enemy, who is the leader of a host like himself; whose object is the utter ruin of our souls: a never-tiring, crafty enemy; a cruel and raging enemy, who will grant no mercy, as he hopes for none himself; an enemy with whom no parleying must be; against whom a constant unremitting hostility is the only safe way for us. "Put you on," says St. Paul, "the armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil: for our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places" (Eph. vi, 11-12).—*H. G. Hughes.*

THE EVIL SPIRITS TRY TO PUT US OFF OUR GUARD

The evil spirits never make truce with us. If seemingly they leave us in peace, they do so only to put us off our guard so that they may surprise and overwhelm us with their next attack.
—*St. John Climacus.*

THE THREE CHIEF TEMPTATIONS

The first temptation is that of riches, the second, that of honours, the third, that of pride, and by these three steps, Satan leads us to all other vices.—*St. Ignatius.*

I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members.
—*Rom.* VII, 23.

With the mind I serve the law of God; but with the flesh, the law of sin.—Rom. VII, 25.

HOPE IN TEMPTATIONS

As long as I sojourn here, so far from Thee, I am more present to myself than to Thee, yet I know concerning Thee that thou canst in no manner be violated or receive any hurt; but as for myself, what temptations I am able to withstand, and what not, I do not know. But my hope is that Thou art faithful, who will not suffer

us to be tempted above our strength, but with the temptations wil also make a way to escape that we may sustain it (I Cor. x).

—*St. Augustine*

IN TEMPTATIONS REMEMBER THE PRESENCE OF GOD

One day, a young man, who was often tormented with bad thoughts, went to a priest and said to him: "Father, I am constantly tormented with bad thoughts, tell me the best means of putting them away." "My son," said the priest, "if your head were made of glass, so that everyone could see these thoughts, how long would you keep them in your mind?" "Oh! I would put them away instantly, for I would be filled with shame if anyone knew that I was thinking about them." "God sees every one of your thoughts more clearly than if they were covered by thin transparent glass," said the priest; "therefore, when these wicked thoughts come to your mind, say to yourself, 'God sees me,' and immediately they will fly from you."

When St. Thomas of Aquin was on his death-bed, one of his brethren in religion asked him to give him a rule which he might follow, so that he might never offend God. St. Thomas answered: "My brother, if you keep yourself always in the presence of God and remember that He is always seeing you, you will never lose His love by yielding to sin."

LIFELONG STRUGGLE WITH TEMPTATIONS

A certain novice complained to the Abbot Theodore that he had been for eight years trying to overcome his evil inclinations, and that he had not yet been able to do this, but that they still annoyed him. "My brother," replied the abbot, "you complain of this warfare of eight years, and I have spent seventy years in solitude, and during all that time I have not for a single day been free from temptations, and every day during all these years I have had to contend with my evil inclinations, so that I might be able to keep them in subjection. It is only when this life is ended that our struggle against temptation will come to an end."

FLEE THOSE WHO ARE OBSTACLES TO THY SALVATION

Thou mayest love some one so dearly as to regard him as the apple of thine eye; thou mayst believe him to be no less necessary to thee than thy hand or thy foot. Yet if he be an obstacle to thy salvation, if his company be to thee a cause of sin, cut thyself off from him, and leave him, for longer association with him might serve only to cast both into hell, whereas by separation thou will be saved and possibly thy friend with thee.—*St. John Chrysostom.*

FLY! FLY! FLY!

A young man who had often yielded to temptations against holy purity, because he did not run away when he was tempted, asked a holy man to tell him what he should do that he might never again fall into sin, for he desired most sincerely to save his soul. "There are three things you must do if you desire to overcome these

temptations," replied the man of God. "Firstly, you must fly away; secondly, you must fly away at once; thirdly, you must fly away quickly. The way by which you can most readily overcome temptations is to fly away from them."

I'LL KEEP MY EYES SHUT

Little Henry had been very ill. When he was slowly recovering, and was just able to rise from his bed and go about a little, he was left alone for a short time in the room, when his sister came in eating a piece of sweet cake. Henry's mother had told him that he must not eat anything but what she gave him, and that it would be dangerous for him to eat what the other children did, until he was stronger. His appetite was coming back, and the cake in his sister's hand looked very tempting. He wanted very much to take a bite of it, and his kind sister would gladly have given it to him. "Jeannie," he said to her, "you must run out of the room at once, and take that sweet cake with you. I'll keep my eyes shut till you get outside the door, so that I may not be tempted to take it." If also grown-up people would shut their eyes when they are in temptation, they would escape much sin and trouble.

DO NOT WORRY OVER TEMPTATIONS

Do not torment yourself about evil, impure, or sensual thoughts, nor about your miseries or lukewarmness, when you endure these things in spite of yourself: St. Peter and St. Paul were not able entirely nor partially to avoid such distresses.—*St. Ignatius.*

TEMPTATIONS ARE NOT OF THEMSELVES SINFUL

It is not a sin to be tempted; it is a sin only when we give way to temptation. It is when we are tempted most that God is nearest to us, because He wants to be near us, His children, to help us when we call upon Him.

St. Catherine of Sienna was one day tempted very much with bad thoughts, but by God's holy grace she put them all away. Not long afterwards, Our Blessed Lord was pleased to appear to her in a visible manner. As soon as she saw Him, she cried out: "O my God, where were you when the devil was tempting me with those wicked thoughts?" "My daughter," He replied, "I was in the midst of your heart all the time." "O my dearest Lord," said the Saint, "is it possible that you could have been there in the midst of such frightful temptations?" "Yes, my child, I was there watching over you when you were fighting against them, and helping you to overcome them; and when I saw how much you detested them for love of Me, My Heart was filled with the greatest joy."

THE DANGEROUS SPARK

If we see a spark fall upon our clothing we make all possible haste to extinguish it, that no conflagration may result. Protect yourselves with the same or even greater apprehension from the fire that is never extinguished, and remember that the sensual thought is the spark thrown into our minds, and if not routed on the spot it will

be stirred by Satan and kindled into a lively blaze by which the sou is likely to perish.—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

THE NEAR OCCASION

St. Augustine relates a story about a young friend of his, Alpiu by name, who went to Rome to pursue his studies. It was customar for the young men of Rome to amuse themselves by going to publi shows. On one occasion, Alpius was forced, against his will, t accompany some of his friends to one of these places of amusemen He was, however, resolved to close his eyes that no sinful scene migh imprint itself on his soul. But, sad to relate, he forgot to close hi *ears,* and thus sin entered his heart. About the middle of the per formance, the audience began to shout and applaud loudly. Alpiu forgot his resolution. Opening his eyes, he was attracted by th scene, and so he continued to gaze till the play was finished.

Night after night saw Alpius again the theatre. Unmindful alik of his prayers and his studies, he soon fell deep in sin. Though it i gratifying to relate that Alpius, through the supplications of S Augustine, again returned to the path of duty, still this example ough to warn us how readily the devil may ensnare us.

—*Frederick Reute*

IDLENESS INCITES TEMPTATIONS

We read in the "Lives of the Fathers of the Desert" of a youn solitary who did not employ his time as conscientiously as he ought t have done. In consequence of this, he was frequently idle, an during these idle moments he was often tempted with impure thought One day, when he was tormented more than usual with them, he wer to his superior and told him about it. The superior, who knew th young monk's disposition to idleness, said he would try to cure hin So he at once gave him much more constant labour, and more heav work than he had been accustomed to, and commanded him to accom plish it without delay. A few days afterwards the superior, meetin him alone, asked him if he were still troubled with the temptations h had complained of to him. "Ah, no," he replied. "How could I fin time to be tempted, since you have imposed on me so many and suc continual labours? I have scarcely even time to breathe."

COURTING DANGER

Very particularly in the rash season of youth do we ignore th small beginnings from which gigantic evils are destined to flow. I only the young could be taught to discipline their imagination an control the irregular cravings of their hearts, how many ghastly lif tragedies we should be spared! Yet you know with what perversit they will court danger. After the capture of Port Arthur numbe of Japanese soldiers were blown to bits, because, in spite of ever warning, they would experiment with the shells that lay strewn o the ground, or explore the mines that ran under it. It required th sternest orders to get them to desist from their foolhardy curiosit Now we do not all possess the physical courage of these curiou and reckless soldiers, and would probably be very cautious, indee in handling dynamite or gun-cotton. But there are moral explosiv with which we tamper still more recklessly; there are moral min

beneath life's surface which, with still more wanton folly, we are eager to explore. We are not afraid of reading any books, however unreligious, anarchical, or immoral; we do not shrink from any companions, however cynical and depraved; we are not ashamed to haunt theaters and music halls of more than doubtful reputation, or visit dancing casinos where the latest dance atrocities rob our youth of the last vestiges of modesty and break down the last barriers of decorum or reserve.—*P. J. Gannon, S. J.*

BOOKS AND READING

GOOD READING

A good book is a good adviser, because no one else would dare to tell you what is told you without hesitation by the book.—*St. Theresa.*

St. Ignatius became a Saint through reading the book "The Lives of the Saints." Having been wounded in battle he found his confinement monotonous and called for one of the frivolous novels popular in his days. Fortunately none of those novels were at hand and he was given the "Lives of the Saints," which proved a powerful means of grace.

NOVEL READING

Novel reading is condemnable because of the evil effects upon the soul. I hold that the very best and purest work of atheistic fiction can not be read without a sensible diminution of the grace of God in the soul, and the reason of this is that, by their very nature, they are of the earth, earthy; and if they do not gloss over vice, and depreciate virtue, like the worst class of novels, they substitute natural virtues for supernatural, and lead away the mind to meditate on creatures, instead of being totally absorbed in God. Secondly, they bring the young and the incautious into, perhaps, the most fatal habit that can be contracted, that dreamy, sleepy, sentimental, imaginative frame of mind that utterly unfits them for the real, practical business of life, and predisposes to mortal sin. Novel reading has somewhat the same effect as opium. Novel readers, like opium eaters, live in a world of dreams. They fancy, feed upon their fancies, live by fancy, and the consequence is, they become dissatisfied with their conditions in life, they perform their duties mechanically, they acquire a love of dress and finery. All the lessons of early life vanish before the new lessons of the novel. The world is painted in false colours, the ambition of the young is directed, not to the love of God, or to promoting the love of Jesus Christ, but to figure before the world, and to catch the applause of the world; in a word, the mind is utterly demoralized, and, with such principles sin is easy, nay, it is not at all impossible that the novel reader may enter upon a course of sin through an imagined sense of duty and of principle.—*P. A. Sheehan.*

NEWSPAPERS

I would remind you Catholics of a few things it would be well to remember. The editor of the ordinary newspaper is an individual of

flesh and blood, whose opinion is not worth more than that of any other man; that he writes, not to preach the truth, but to earn his livelihood; that he therefore shapes his opinions according to the opinions of the party he represents; that, therefore, his is the most servile of all professions; that in treating of Catholic subjects, the ignorance of average newspaper writers is only equaled by their ingenuity in framing falsehoods and their fluency in calumniating; that the paper must please the people or the people will not buy the paper; that, therefore, as the public still demand the periodical joke, the periodical lie, the periodical misrepresentation of Catholic faith and Catholic practice, the paper must insert them; and that, therefore, on all Catholic subjects, they are utterly untrustworthy, ignorant of our doctrines, of our practices, misrepresenting our principles and moral maxims; scurrilous, false, and libelous.—*P. A. Sheehan.*

PIOUS READING

A certain man who had committed the crime of murder was condemned to death. During the time that elapsed between the sentence and the day fixed for his execution he was constantly visited by a priest, who prepared him for death. This priest also gave him some pious books to read. One day the unhappy man said to the priest: "O my Father, if I had always had books like these, and if I had since my childhood frequently read them, I should never have come to this terrible end."

FRIVOLOUS READING

During a mission, a certain lady went to one of the fathers to speak to him. They had not been speaking together long when the priest discovered that she was given to reading novels of a dangerous and exciting kind.

"I see that you read much, and that you prefer light literature, such as novels," the priest said to her. "Yes, Father, it is quite true; but I read only for amusement." "If such is the case," said the priest, "just continue to read them; only each time you take up the book be sure to say to God: 'O my God, I am going to read this novel to please Thee. I know that it contains unsound doctrines, and bad counsels, and the relation of evil deeds, yet I am going to read about these things for Thy glory and the salvation of my soul.'" She answered: "O Father, that is an impossibility! Such a prayer would be a mocking of God." "No, madam," replied the priest; "if the reading is not bad, you can, and you ought, to make that prayer." "But—but——" she began, with some hesitation. "Oh, I see," interrupted the priest; "you do not seem to be quite so sure now that the books you read are so harmless as you at first pretended they were. Tell me the truth, now. Were you not much more pious before you began to read those books than you are now?" The lady was obliged to acknowledge that she was. "And did you not go more frequently to the Sacraments then than you have done since you have begun to read these books?" "Yes, I must acknowledge that I did." "Then I have only one answer to give you. You ask me what you are to do to serve God as you ought. My answer is this: Cease to read the books you have hitherto been reading, since they have

proved themselves so hurtful to you and so dangerous, and you will soon find your former piety restored to you." The lady did as she was advised. It was at first very difficult to break off the evil habit she had acquired, but in the end, by perseverance and prayer, she succeeded, and soon became very happy again and a good Christian.

READING FORBIDDEN BOOKS

Let us recall to mind the edifying words of St. Francis de Sales, in the preface to his treatise on the errors of the Lutherans and Calvinists, where he gives the assurance of having conscientiously asked for and received permission to read their writings. "We fervently request our Catholic readers," writes the Saint, "not to let an evil suspicion against us arise, as if we had read the forbidden books in spite of the prohibition of Holy Church. We are able to assure them in all truth of having done nothing forbidden to a good Christian, and of having taken every precaution due in a matter of so vast importance, so as not to incur in any way the very just censures of the Church, nor in any manner to violate the profound reverence we owe to her." The permission granted him, dated July 16, 1608, is still extant; likewise one asked by St. Charles Borromeo.

THE POISON IN IRRELIGIOUS BOOKS

Few lay men are sufficiently instructed to refute all the objections openly raised against religion. And fewer still are those who can detect the poison of infidelity and impiety instilled into the pages of irreligious books.

Has the lesson of the centuries taught the Church no wisdom? Have our modern notions outgrown the experience and the prudence of our aged mother? Has the rapid spread of the sixteenth century heresy taught no lesson through its literature? And in the eighteenth century was not the derision of all that is sacred due to the impious productions of French writers?

In an endless stream there flow from the printing press books that are anti-Christian in spirit, some professedly so, others cloaked under the specious guise of science and philosophy. Who shall be the watchman on the walls of Israel to warn us of the enemies' approach if it be not the Divinely appointed one of Israel? We stand in need of direction in the warfare. We require someone who can point out the weakness and the dangers that beset us in our reading, for we see not the pitfalls till the harm is done.

Mrs. Humphrey Ward, George Eliot and others, are read with avidity and their subtle influence is not realized till the iron is in our soul and the sweet prayers of our childhood have grown insipid. The mire of Zola and the nauseating realism of D'Annunzio leave us unclean and lower our moral standard. We learn from Sudermann and Ibsen the mere joy of life and the disenchantment of life's most sacred relations. So we sail on in our mad rush with no strong hand on the tiller, no guiding mind to save us from the shoals and the rocks, till the Church has lost its attraction and we no longer think of God and have no further concern for our future. We grow heedless of the great principle that we must not expose ourselves to the pernicious influence of books which weaken our faith

and our moral code, for "he that loveth the danger shall perish therein."—*J. W. Sullivan.*

DANGEROUS READING

What else is the great mass of our modern popular literature but an examen of conscience, publicly made by the author before his readers and the whole world? And so deeply are his vices rooted in his heart that, not satisfied with presenting them under the attractive disguise of imagery, they must be spread out to cater to the tastes of his readers, in all their filthy and disgusting details.
—*I. Hecker, C. S. P.*

The religious savant, who has to do a great deal with infidel books must be on his watch incessantly, even though he has the knowledge and the intellect to detect wrong conclusions. Thus we find that great scholars often display a striking fear of irreligious books. Of Cardinal Mai it is told: "He said—and this we can vouch for—I have the permission to read forbidden books; but I never make use of it nor do I intend to do so."

The learned L. A. Muratori wrote a refutation of a heretic book. In the preface he thought it necessary to apologize for having read the book. He said: "The book got into my hands very late, and for a long time I could not get myself to read it. For why should one read the writings of innovators except to commit one's self to their folly? I seek and like books which confirm my faith, but not those which would lead me away from my religion. But when I heard that the book was circulated in Italy, I resolved to muster up my strength for the defence of truth and religion, and for the safety of my brethren."

St. Francis de Sales, with touching simplicity, gives in his writings praise to God for having preserved him from losing his faith through the reading of heretical books. Of the learned Spanish philosopher Balmez is preserved a saying that he once addressed to two of his friends: "You know, the Faith is deeply rooted in my heart. Nevertheless, I cannot read a fallacious book without feeling the necessity of regaining the right mood by reading Holy Writ, the Imitation of Christ, and the writings of Blessed Louis of Granada."

HUMILITY

HUMILITY

And I, a wretch, and the vilest of men, how shall I bring Thee into my house, who can hardly spend one-half hour devoutly? And would to God I had ever once spent one-half hour as I ought! O my God, how much did they endeavour to do to please Thee! Alas, how little it is that I do! How short a time do I spend when I prepare to communicate? Seldom am I wholly recollected, very seldom free from all distraction! And yet surely, in the life-giving presence of Thy Deity, no unbecoming thought should occur, nor anything created

take up my mind; for it is not an angel, but the Lord of angels that I am to entertain.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

If you find a man who is always cheerful and content, you may rest assured you have found an humble man. And this is even according to reason, since an humble, unambitious heart is so easily satisfied.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

A famous preacher relates an amusing, but very instructive, incident, from which we may learn how readily men deceive themselves about genuine humility. A woman came to the preacher making profuse protestations of her great sinfulness; she concludes: "Oh, dear Father, I am the greatest sinner on earth." The good father had gathered some experience in his dealings with men, and he immediately perceived the insincerity of that woman's self-abasement. He put her virtue to a test. "Yes," he answers, "it is true, you have grievously failed, but—." The woman at once interrupted him: "What? Who will dare to say anything against me?"—*Charles Bruehl.*

HUMILITY THE BASIS OF VIRTUE

A just man who abandons humility is rejected and reproved by God in spite of all his good works, and that which seems in him to be virtue is only vice.—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

POWER OF HUMILITY

There is nothing that compels the Divine King like humility. It drew Him from His throne to the lowly stable in Bethlehem and through humility we can draw Him into our soul.—*St. Theresa.*

Take up My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls.
—*Matt.* XI, 29.

Where humility is, there also is wisdom.—Prov. XI, 2.

He that hath been humbled shall be in glory: and he that shall bow down his eyes, he shall be saved.—Job XXII, 29.

TRUE HUMILITY

Supposing, brother, that we arrive at St. Mary of the Angels all drenched with rain and trembling with cold, all covered with mud and exhausted from hunger, and if, when we knock at the convent gate, the porter should come angrily and ask us who we are; if after we have told him we are two of his brothers he should answer angrily: what you say is not the truth, you are but two impostors going about to deceive the world, and take away the alms of the poor, begone, I say; if he refuses to open to us, and leaves us outside exposed to the snow and rain, suffering from cold and hunger till night arrives—then if we accept such injustice, such cruelty and such contempt without being ruffled, and without mur-

muring, believing with humility and charity that the porter really knows us, and that it is God who makes him speak thus against us, O Brother Leo, write down that this is a cause for perfect joy.—*St. Francis of Assisi.*

He that has true humility considers himself the most imperfect of all men; he looks upon himself as a criminal; he considers it a secret blindness that he cannot perceive the faults which everyone sees in him.—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

FALSE HUMILITY

Often we consider ourselves humble simply because we do not desire honour, but just as soon as we consider our honour in the least attacked, we are immediately exasperated, and this proves that we are not humble.—*St. Theresa.*

A CAUSE FOR HUMILITY

If we consider everything earthly and imperfect that is to be found in us, we should have many motives for humbling ourselves before God and men, and even before our inferiors.

—*St. Vincent de Paul*

THE PROOF OF HUMILITY

It is proof of deep humility if one realizes that he is condemned without guilt and yet suffers in silence. This is an excellent imitation of Christ, who innocently suffered for our guilt.

—*St. Theresa*

THE EFFECT OF HUMILITY

In the same way as darkness flees before the sun, so does bitterness of spirit and anger flee before humility.—*St. Jerome.*

One day St. Anthony had a vision, in which he saw the whole world covered with snares and nets which Satan had spread out to catch the souls of men. This sight filled him with great surprise and sadness. "O, my God," he exclaimed, "who can ever hope to escape all these snares, for they are everywhere?" He heard a voice which answered him: "The man who is humble."

THE LACK OF HUMILITY

There is a vast deal of theoretical humility amongst Catholics but very little practical humility. Instead of practicing the lesson that were left us by the Man of Sorrows, who, "When he was reviled did not revile", our gospel is "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, insult for insult, injury for injury," or if we are very good we only ask an apology for an insult, and only the fullest reparation for even imaginary injuries. This shows at least, dear brethren, how irrational is the excuse of the uncharitable, that the faults they speak of are trivial, and their motives are harmless. If you will not accept that excuse when others speak uncharitably of you, you ought not to offer that excuse for your uncharitable remarks about others.—*P. A. Sheehan.*

THE SAFE COURSE OF HUMILITY

St. Gregory compares the two men in the Gospel to two ships starting out for some distant port. The one a gallant, splendid craft with a precious cargo; a proud vessel, strong in keel, in prow majestic and beauteous in canvas, laughing at the very hint of disaster. The other a frail bark of humble appearance, not trusted with valuable freight. And of the two the pretentious vessel never reaches its harbour; the humble one, after having been tossed about by wave and wind, finally gains the destined port. The Saint also assigns the reason for the disparity of their fate: At the helm of the one sat pride, steering it into ruin and destruction; the other one was safely guided off shoal and reef by the cautious hand of humility.

—*Charles Bruehl.*

MORTIFICATION

MORTIFICATION

Three practical rules of mortification given by an old writer are: First. *Do all, that you ought to do, well; and do not do what is forbidden.* This loyalty to duty is a splendid habitual mortification and if it is done for spiritual motives will sanctify the soul by training it to obey God.

Second. *Accept all that happens to you with patience,* regarding your lot and experiences in life as the holy Will of God in your regard. We may remember this rule by the words of St. Paul: "Giving thanks *always for all things,* in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to God and the Father" (Eph. v, 20). The penances God sends us in life must be valued more than all self-inflicted penances; they do not puff us up, self-love cannot cry "enough," and when accepted are quite as voluntary as those we invent. Practice this, my brethren, in poverty, sorrow, bereavement, anxiety or whatever be the cross God chooses for your sanctification.

Third. *Draw the line clearly and firmly* in things which are pleasing to nature; *e. g.,* food, drink, idleness, expenditure, etc. The rule of the spiritual life is to use the pleasant things of life for the good of the soul rather than for the gratification of the body. Though all things be possible, all things are not lawful, and our first consideration must be: "Will this harm or benefit me spiritually." The soul and body have to work together in harness, and both must be considered, but in this order: the soul first and the body second.

What was the reason why some of the Saints were so perfect and contemplative? Because they made it their study wholly to mortify in themselves all earthly desires; and thus they were enabled, with the whole interior of their heart, to cleave to God, and freely to attend to themselves.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

One day when St. Theresa was very ill and could take no food, she thought she would like to taste an orange. So someone brought her a few very sweet ones. As soon as they were brought to her, instead of touching them herself she sent them to some of her

poor people who were sick. One of the sisters asked her why she had done so, since she stood in need of them more than anyone else. "I feel more pleasure," she said, "in giving them to the poor than if I kept them for myself; when I see them satisfied I also am full of joy."

OVERCOMING OURSELVES

Who is a greater hindrance and trouble to thee than thine own unmortified affection of heart? A good and devout man first disposes his works inwardly which he is to do outwardly. Neither do they draw him to the desires of an inordinate inclination; but he bends them to the rule of right reason. Who has a stronger conflict than he who strives to overcome himself? And this must be our business, to strive to overcome ourselves, and daily to gain strength against ourselves, and to grow better and better.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

SELF DENIAL

It is true every one is desirous of acting according to his own liking, and is more inclined to such as are of his own mind. But if God be amongst us, we must sometimes give up our own opinion for the sake of peace. Who is so wise as to be able fully to know all things? Therefore, trust not too much to thine own thoughts; but be willing also to hear the sentiments of others. Although thy opinion be good, yet if for God's sake thou leavest it to follow that of another, it will be more profitable to thee.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

SELF DISCIPLINE

The time which ought to be devoted to the taming of passions is ill-employed in repeating long prayers.—*St. Ignatius.*

FASTING

THE PRECEPT OF FASTING

The precept of fasting is in substance of Divine origin. It existed even before the fall of man, not, as now, to the end that men may satisfy for their sins, but to test men's obedience to God. Had our first parents kept the simple fast enjoined upon them in Eden, we should not have to keep the much harder fast imposed on us to-day. After the fall we find that God time and time again enjoined a fast upon men. "Be converted to Me with all your heart, in fasting and in weeping," are the words He spoke by the mouth of His prophet Joel. Moses fasted forty days in the mount with God, and Elias, in like manner, forty days, before he had the wondrous vision of Horeb. Daniel fasted; the Ninivites fasted at the preaching of Jonas.—*Bishop A. MacDonald.*

When you fast, be not as the hypocrites, sad. For they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward.—But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face.—That thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee.—Matt. VI, 16-18.

Be converted to Me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning.—Joel II, 12.

FASTING

Preparation of the soil, in the spiritual order, is effected by fasting. This is one main way in which fasting is a means of grace. It is a means by which the soul is prepared for the reception of grace and freed from the evil passions that stifle the growth of virtue. And it is by all odds the most effective means. In order to secure a thorough amendment of life it is needful to pluck up sin by the roots. Evil weeds grow apace, and, as long as their roots remain in the soil, they will continue to grow. The man who is sorry for his sins and confesses them receives pardon. But if he takes no steps to remove the roots of sin that remain in the form of evil habits, the purpose of amendment implied in his sorrow for sin is almost sure to be fruitless. The old evil passions of his nature will resume their former sway. It is of little use cutting down bad weeds if you leave their roots in the ground; they will be sure to sprout again. This is especially true of sins of the flesh, which are preëminently the bad weeds of our corrupt nature. As men we are part beast and part angel; if we feed the beast fat, we starve the angel. The only way to develop what is best in us, the spiritual, the angelic element of our nature, is to starve, or at any rate to refrain from feeding overmuch, the bestial element. Hence, it is that the Apostle (II Cor. vi, 5, 6) couples "fastings" with "chastity," for without mortification of the flesh the angelic virtue can hardly, if at all, be cultivated.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

THE PURPOSE OF FASTING

The Church, filled with the spirit of Jesus Christ, prescribes fasting to her children for many reasons: as a means of doing penance for the sins they have committed; of keeping from the sins occasioned by indulging too freely in eating and drinking; as a means of averting misfortunes or Divine punishments; of obtaining favours from the Divine Goodness; of learning how to control our appetite and mastering our passions; of detaching us from worldly goods and enjoyments frivolous and transitory; and of inducing us to aspire after those that are heavenly, noble, perfect and everlasting. Fasting also gives us opportunities for almsgiving, so that we may give to the poor what we spare by our fasts. Moreover, it wards off numberless diseases caused by over-indulging the appetite, for experience proves that those who grant their appetite everything it craves do not enjoy good health, but are a prey to various diseases, which render them miserable and shorten life. With good reason does the Church sing in one of the Prefaces of the Mass: "Thou, by means of corporal fast, holdest the vices in check, elevatest the mind and impartest strength and rewards." Fasting, therefore, holds our passions in check, raises our mind heavenward, gives us strength to overcome our passions and to avoid sin, and is deserving of endless reward. "Fasting," says St. Leo, "has ever been the nourishment of virtue. Abstinence is the source of chaste thoughts, wise

resolves and salutary counsel. By mortification the flesh dies to its concupiscences and the spirit is renewed in virtue."

—Ferreol Girardey, C. SS. R.

WHY DO WE FAST?

We fast chiefly for three reasons: First, in order to repress fleshly concupiscence; wherefore the Apostle says, "In fastings: in chastity," since chastity is preserved by fasting . . . Secondly, we fast in order that the mind may be the more easily lifted up to the thought of heavenly things . . . ; and, thirdly, we fast in order to make satisfaction for our sins; whence it is written in the Prophet Joel "Be converted to Me with all your heart, in fasting and in weeping and in mourning" (Joel ii, 12).—*St. Thomas Aquinas.*

FASTING IN BODY AND IN SPIRIT

To deny one's body nourishment has little value if at the same time the heart and sense revel in pleasures.—*Albertus Magnus.*

THE OBSERVANCE OF LENT

The observance of Lent is the very badge of the Christian warfare. By it we prove ourselves not to be enemies of the Cross of Christ. By it we avert the scourges of Divine Justice. By it we gain strength against the prince of darkness, for it shields us with heavenly help. Should mankind grow remiss in their observance of Lent, it would be a detriment to God's glory, a disgrace to the Christian religion, and a danger to Christian souls. Neither can it be doubted but that such negligence would become the source of misery to the world, of public calamity, and of private woe.

—Benedict XIV.

ALMS

TO PRAYER AND FASTING ALMS-DEEDS MUST BE ADDED

To prayer let us unite fasting and alms. Fasting is indeed most intimately connected with prayer; for the mind of those who are loaded with meat and drink is so pressed down as not to be able to raise itself to the contemplation of God, or to comprehend the meaning of prayer. Alms-deeds come next, and have also intimate connection with prayer; for who would dare to say that he is endued with charity, who, possessing the means of acting kindly to those who subsist on the mercy of others, assists not a neighbour and a brother? or in what language shall he who is devoid of charity, demand the assistance of God, unless, while he implores the pardon of his sin he at the same time humbly beg of God (to grant him) charity? This triple remedy was therefore Divinely ordained to aid man towards the attainment of salvation; for, whereas by sin we offend God, wrong our neighbour, or injure ourselves, we appease the wrath of God by holy prayer; redeem our offenses against man by alms-deeds; by fasting wash away the defilements of our past life; and although they each avail against all sorts of crimes, yet are they especially appropriate and adapted to each of those sins which we have mentioned.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

ALMS-GIVING EMBRACES ALL WORKS OF MERCY

The special work of Christian charity is alms-giving. Whatever is done out of compassion for God's sake to relieve those that are in need is, in a true sense, an alms. This is so great a means of grace that it is reckoned as one of the three keys of the kingdom of Heaven, the other two being fasting and prayer. Our neighbour's needs may be corporal or spiritual, and so alms-giving embraces both the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. And as it is a greater and better work to relieve the needs of the soul, by so much as the soul is itself better and more precious than the body, so the giving of spiritual alms, the performance of the spiritual works of mercy, is far more meritorious than the giving of corporal alms.

—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

ALMS

Those that give alms only to those they consider worthy, have reason to pray that the Lord in judging them will not follow their example.—*St. Theresa.*

An alms, in the widest sense, is anything given to a needy person out of compassion. In this sense it comprises the spiritual as well as the corporal works of mercy, for man, being made up of soul and body, must have the needs of both soul and body supplied. But as a work of penance, of reparation for sin, an alms is a something given to relieve the bodily or temporal needs of one's neighbour.

—*Bishop A. MacDonald.*

Let not thy hand be stretched out to receive, and shut when thou shouldst give.—Ecclus. IV, 36.

According to thy ability be merciful.—If thou have much, give abundantly; if thou have little, take care even so to bestow willingly a little.—Tob. IV, 8-9.

He that giveth to the poor, shall not want; he that despiseth his entreaty, shall suffer indigence.—Prov. XXVIII, 27.

Prayer is good with fasting and alms, more than to lay up treasures of gold:—For alms delivereth from death: and the same is that which purgeth away sins, and maketh to find mercy and Life Everlasting.
—*Tob.* XII, 8-9.

Stretch out thy hand to the poor, that thy expiation and thy blessing may be perfected.—Ecclus. VII, 36.

He that stoppeth his ear against the cry of the poor, shall also cry himself, and shall not be heard.—Prov. XXI, 13.

He that is inclined to mercy shall be blessed; for of his bread he hath given to the poor.—Prov. XXII, 9.

When thou dost an alms-deed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honoured by men.—Matt. VI, 2.

Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail they may receive you into everlasting dwellings.
—*Luke* XVI, 9.

ALMS TO BE GIVEN FOR GOD'S SAKE

An alms-deed is defined as something given out of compassion to a person in need. But unless it is given for God's sake, it is not a good work in the Christian point of view, I mean not such a work as can merit an eternal reward. The thing given may belong to the spiritual order or to the corporal; it may be for the soul or for the body. Hence alms-deeds are coextensive with the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. The corporal works are seven in number, corresponding to seven corporal needs of our neighbour that we may be called on to supply. These needs exist in life or just after death.
—*Bishop A. MacDonald.*

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE UNCHARITABLE

If you can prevent a poor man from starving to death, by giving him food and drink, and do not do so, you are guilty of his death.
—*St. Ambrose.*

ALMS-DEEDS NECESSARY

With our means and by our coöperation we must be liberal to the poor, and this by that very true argument that, on the day of final judgment, God will abhor and consign to everlasting fire those who shall have omitted or neglected the offices of charity, but will invite in the language of praise, and introduce into their heavenly country, those who shall have acted kindly towards the poor. Their respective sentences have been already pronounced by the lips of Christ the Lord: "Come ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you" (Matt. XXV, 34, 41); and: "Depart from Me ye cursed into everlasting fire" (*ib.* V, 41).
—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

MONEY A PASSPORT TO HEAVEN

Some time ago there was a newspaper competition for the best definition of money. The person who won the first prize defined money as the passport to everywhere except Heaven. For superficial thinking this is fairly correct. But a deeper consideration and a wider application might show it to be false in every word. For with some people it might happen that money were the passport to nowhere except Heaven. Misapplied, it can be the cause of all evil; whilst rightly applied, it can be the instrumental cause of supreme happiness.
—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

FORTITUDE

The torture of death could not make the martyrs faithless but we are made faithless by a little money.—*St. Thomas of Villanova.*

Fortitude is that moral virtue which makes us face any danger and even death itself, in the discharge of duty. If justice, or honesty is the very framework of character, fortitude is the bracing and the

strength of it. Justice dictates the doing of what is right, but it is fortitude that says, "Let the right be done though the heavens should fall." This virtue is popularly known as courage, or pluck, or grit. But many a man who would pass with the world as courageous or plucky might quite lack the moral virtue of fortitude. A man may show great courage in doing what is wrong, whereas it is only in doing what is right that he shows fortitude. Again, some very rash deeds may be quite plucky, but the man of true fortitude never does rash things. Once more, fortitude consists not merely in doing and in daring, but also in enduring. Indeed the very highest degree of Christian fortitude, which is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, is to be found in the martyr who endures torments and death rather than betray the Faith.—*Bishop A. MacDonald.*

TEMPERANCE

Temperance is the virtue which holds the animal passions in check, and makes them obey the rule of right reason. Its special office is to impose moderation in the use of sensible pleasures. It is thus opposed to the two capital sins of gluttony and lust, the former of which includes all excess in eating and in drinking. It embraces as its subject virtues, abstinence, sobriety, modesty, chastity, as also meekness, which restrains the passion of anger. It will thus be seen that sobriety is but one phase of temperance, so to say, though in popular usage, the two words are made to mean one and the same thing. Sobriety is opposed not so much to the use as to the abuse of strong drink, and the resulting vice of drunkenness, one of the worst and most degrading of vices. "Temperance is good, total abstinence is better," was the motto of Cardinal Manning, one of the greatest apostles of temperance. Nor will any one question the truth or the wisdom of the motto who realizes how dangerous and stealthy a foe is intoxicating drink. At the same time we must bear in mind that sobriety is the essential thing, and that the man who rigidly abstains from all intoxicants may be very far indeed from practicing the cardinal virtue of temperance. Lust works greater havoc in souls than even drunkenness, and chastity as a moral virtue takes the palm from sobriety. It is to the chaste especially, to "the clean of heart," Our Lord has promised that "they shall see God." This, of course, does not mean that sobriety is not a great virtue and necessary to salvation. It only means that chastity is greater, and if that were possible, even more necessary.—*Bishop A. MacDonald.*

PRUDENCE

The Greeks of old, who set great store by the practice of moral virtues, called prudence "the charioteer." The business of the man who drives the chariot is to keep a watchful eye on the horses to rein them in when they are too fiery, to urge them on when they lag, and to keep them in the right road, letting them swerve from their course neither to this side nor to that. Like unto this is the office of prudence. It is the virtue that guides the steps of man in the journey of life, and enables him to keep the golden mean wherein lies moral virtues—for vice lies ever in extremes. Thus, the man who gives of his means too freely is a spendthrift, while the man who stints in

giving is apt to become a miser. Too much of even the very best thing is good for nothing; too little is short of enough. Prudence teaches us what to do, and when to do it, and how much to do at a time. It preserves justice from undue severity, sets reasonable bounds to temperance, and keeps fortitude from passing into rashness. Christian prudence, or counsel, is one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. It guides us by a higher light than that of reason, and its dictates often run counter to those of the merely natural virtue.

—*Bishop A. MacDonald.*

PRUDENCE IN SPEECH

In dealing with men we must speak little and listen much, and the little we do say must be said as if it was to be heard by all the world, even though we are speaking to one alone.—*St. Ignatius.*

ST. ANTHONY'S DECISION

Many monks had come to St. Anthony from various parts, in order to discuss which was the virtue whereby one might climb with security to the heights of perfection. Some thought austerity of life, with watchings and fastings, to be the most necessary virtue; others held perfect contempt of earthly things to be of still greater importance; while others again thought solitude, charity, etc., each one exalting different virtues, according to his inclinations and graces, and giving reasons for the opinions he held. At length the great St. Anthony arose, and, while praising all the various virtues named by the others, said that Prudence inspired by the love of God seemed to him of all others the one virtue which best enabled man to reach perfection, for it controlled him in the practice of the others, keeping him from the two extremes of excess and defect. After developing the subject and explaining his reasons, St. Anthony found his brother monks agreed with him that Prudence is that virtue which leads most securely to God.—*Cassian.*

The prudent man saw the evil, and hid himself: the simple passed on, and suffered loss.—*Prov.* XXII, 3.

Have confidence in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not upon thy own prudence.—In all thy ways think on Him, and He will direct thy steps.—Be not wise in thy own conceit: fear God, and depart from evil.—*Prov.* III, 5-7.

PRUDENCE IN MAKING VOWS

St. Francis de Sales had a great devotion to Our Blessed Lady. To testify to her how much he loved her, he made a vow to say every day of his life a certain portion of the Holy Rosary in her honour, which vow he carefully fulfilled all his lifetime. Now it happened that a certain young man, who was very pious, and who also had a great love for the holy Mother of God, having heard of this vow that St. Francis had made, thought he would prove his sincerity of his love for Mary in the same manner. He went to the Saint to tell him of his intention. He was surprised when St. Francis said: "Don't do it. Be careful never to make that vow." The young man said: "You, my Father, did so when you were young like me,

and why do you refuse to allow me to follow your example." "It is just because I was young when I made that vow that I say to you now not to make it. I am older now, and it is because I have learned much by experience that I give you this advice. I do not tell you not to say the Rosary; on the contrary, I advise you and exhort you to say it every day, because it is a prayer exceedingly dear to the Blessed Mother of God. Let this be a firm resolution on your part, but not a vow, because then if you will sometimes omit it, you will not commit a sin."

PRUDENCE IN FERVOUR

Great harm is done by the indiscreet fervour which overlades the boat. The boat must not be empty, for it would then be upset by the wind of temptations, but to lade it so that it sinks is yet worse.
—*St. Ignatius.*

MODERATION TO BE OBSERVED IN FULFILLING OUR DUTIES

Those who live in the world must concern themselves about many things; they have domestic duties and civic duties, duties of earning and duties of spending, the duties of self-cultivation, of providing for the future, and of recreation, duties in science, duties in politics. To these they must devote their energies; it is praiseworthy for them to do so; it may even be supernatural virtue; yet in all this there may be sin.

There is moderation to be observed and due order, even in one's most sacred duties. These cease to be duties and become transgressions when they come into conflict with higher duties. We are bound to intermit them at times in order to perform our duties to God; and in this there is a sacrifice, not indeed of duties, but of something additional that might be done to advance the interests of ourselves, our family, our country. This is where excess comes in and sin.—*Bishop Bellord.*

Above all these things pray to the Most High, that He may direct thy way in truth.—A wise man instructeth his own people.
—*Ecclus.* XXXVII, 19, 26.

He that answereth before he heareth showeth himself to be a fool, and worthy of confusion.—Prov. XVIII, 13.

The wisdom of the flesh is death: but the wisdom of the spirit is life and peace.—Because the wisdom of the flesh is an enemy to God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither can it be.
—*Rom.* VIII, 6-7.

I saw that wisdom excelled folly as much as light differeth from darkness.—The eyes of a wise man are in his head: the fool walketh in darkness.—Eccl. II, 13-14.

To fear God is the fulness of wisdom.—Ecclus. I, 20.

JUSTICE

Justice is the virtue that inclines us to give every one his due. As the rule and measure of the dealings of man with man in the ordinary affairs of life, it is known as honesty. Of character this is the very cornerstone. Given that a man is really honest, even if he lack the other virtues and be held fast in the bonds of many evil habits, there is always hope of his ultimate reform. But if he lack honesty, his reform is well nigh hopeless. If a person is not honest with men, neither will he be honest with his God. The worst form of dishonesty is that which denies to God what is His due. Indeed all dishonesty has its root in the want of the knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, who is the Fount of Justice and will render to every man according to his works. The true servant of God is known in Scripture as a "just man," one who is straightforward in his dealings with God and man. A constant source of temptation to dishonesty is greed, or the love of money, for which reason, perhaps, the Apostle calls it "the root of all evil." We must overcome it by pondering often those words of Our Lord, "What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world if he lose his own soul?"

—*Bishop A. MacDonald*

Do not any unjust thing in judgment, in rule, in weight, or in measure.—*Lev.* XIX, 35.

The just shall live for evermore: and their reward is with the Lord, and the care of them with the Most High.—Therefore shall they receive a kingdom of glory and a crown of beauty at the hand of the Lord: for with His right hand He will cover them, and with His holy arm He will defend them.—*Wisd.* V, 16-17.

Unless your justice abound more than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

—*Matt.* V, 20

MEEKNESS

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord hath not imputed sin, and in whose spirit there is no guile.—*Ps.* XXXI, 2.

MEEKNESS IS STRENGTH OF CHARACTER

One interesting illustration of the strength of character implied in the virtue of meekness is furnished by the life-history of the great opponent of the Turks in the fifteenth century, the illustrious Scanderbeg, King of Albania. In that century the Turks under Mahomet II. again and again menaced the Christianity of Europe by wars of invasion and conquest. But again and again they were heroically repulsed by Scanderbeg with much smaller armies. One historian declares that "there appeared in Scanderbeg something almost above human nature; and it is certain that very few generals have been equal to him in firmness of mind, strength of body, heroic valour, and brilliant success. He gained twenty-two victories over

the Ottomans, whilst they were in the height of their power and under the most energetic of their sultans. . . . He not only displayed the intrepidity of a warrior, and the talents of a consummate general, but also practiced the social and Christian virtues in a high degree of perfection. Most historians represent him as the mildest of men; and yet, such was the struggle within him whenever he met with great opposition, that his lower lip would split and bleed; whence we may conclude that, as he was naturally much inclined to anger, his great mildness must have been the effect of a sublime virtue, and of an extraordinary violence which he offered to himself."—*Hugh T. Henry.*

THE POWER OF GENTLENESS

St. Vincent de Paul said once: "I am now 84 years old and during my whole life I used severe censure only three times, and exactly these three times I did not gain my object, whereas I always succeeded with gentleness."

St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, was the wife of a very violent, hot-tempered man, but she understood so well how to treat him, and how to preserve a friendly exterior, that there was never an open quarrel between them. Other women, knowing the man's angry disposition, once expressed their surprise at this fact, but St. Monica replied: "I obey the husband given me as my master. If I see that he is in a bad temper, I take care not to contradict him; but when he is calm again, I show him quietly that he had no reason to be angry with me." St. Monica did not only live at peace with her husband, but by her patience and gentleness she at last succeeded in converting him to the Faith.—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

My son, keep thy soul in meekness, and give it honour according to its desert.—Who will justify him that sinneth against his own soul? and who will honour him that dishonoureth his own soul?
—*Ecclus.* X, 31,32.

A mild answer breaketh wrath: but a harsh word stirreth up fury.—Prov. XV, 1.

THE WAY OF PERFECTION

THE FOUR ELEMENTS OF SUPERNATURAL LIFE

The elements of the supernatural life are conveyed to us by faith, acting through an organization authorized by God—the Church. They are: 1. Truths to be known; the existence of God and His nature, the nature and destiny of our souls, our fallen state and the economy of redemption, the future life eternal for reward or punishment, the spiritual government by which God rules men on earth. These are more real to us than the impressions of sense or of reason, and far more important; they are a strong incentive to action and a comfort in suffering; they are a new world in which we move unperceived by others.

2. Laws to obey. We are bidden to seek the next world rather than this, to submit our intellect to uncomprehended doctrines, to renounce our pleasures, to subvert the natural order and make the first last, *i. e.,* self, by means of humility, charity and obedience to control all those natural impulses to which we are most strongly drawn. Here are motives directly contrary to those which sense and unaided reason give us.

3. Aids to strengthen us: prayer to the invisible and the Sacraments, whose outward aspects, as viewed by sense or mere reason, are inadequate to their great efforts.

4. An ideal to imitate which sense and reason alone would reject. Our Lord Jesus Christ, not glorified but despised, suffering, degraded by the Cross, with no comeliness that we should desire Him. This ideal was a stumbling-block to the sensual Jews, foolishness to the keen intellect of the cultivated Greek, unmanly weakness to the stern race who ruled a hundred nations from the Capitol at Rome. Such is "the true light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world"; but which is enjoyed only by those "who are born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i, 8-13).—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE INNER LIFE

"If there is one thing more than another," writes a shrewd observer from the other side of the pale, "that attracts me towards Catholicism as a religious system, it is its psychology and its spiritual exercises by which you build up the Divine inner life. Other churches and sects seem to me to leave this important work too much to guess-work and casual inspirations."

The inner life of man is so much more important than the outer as its events are so much more numerous. Our exterior actions are limited in their range, sometimes but few in a day, or extended over a length of time, and not very various in their kinds. But for one good action or one bad action there may have been hundreds of distinct movements of the will; during one protracted piece of work ideas and desires innumerable may have been rushing through our minds. How often it happens that a man's external life leaves many of his faculties unemployed until some casual opportunity gives them play. But they have worked secretly. We are struck by some heroic deed or shocked by the sudden fall of one who has hitherto stood well. We do not understand it; it seems so inconsistent with the past. Yet it is not an isolated fact; it is one of many. It is only the visible production of a virtue that has long been forming, or of a sin which has already become a habit through repeated acts of the will. It is only in the record of his inner life that a man's whole history is written, and all the elements of his character do their work. It is chiefly in the recesses of his mind that the battle between good and evil is fought out. That is where Satan exerts all his power of temptation and often gains a consent to the thought which is refused to the action. It is there

exclusively that the last decisive struggle which precedes death takes place, of which the issue is final perseverance or final impenitence.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTPRINTS OF CHRIST

It is said that a pious monk was once leading a band of followers upon a weary pilgrimage for God and His holy cause. Encountering many hardships and confronted by many dangers, they besought the monk to turn back. They were so weary that they begged they might not be asked to go further. The good father answered their complainings by saying: "Put your feet in the prints of mine, and you will journey with ease." This is really the true solution of many of our perplexities. The rough path of life is made much easier if we follow in the footprints of Christ.

IMPORTANCE OF SALVATION

Almighty God made all things by a simple act of His will, but in accomplishing our salvation He had to shed His Blood. The creation of the universe only cost Him one word. The redemption of our soul cost Him His Blood. We revert this order, we take our salvation very easy, and make great efforts for our temporal welfare.

—*St. Theresa.*

LABOUR FOR YOUR SALVATION

A young anchorite went to one of the ancient hermits of the desert, and asked him why so many persons were trying to become perfect, and yet so few really reached perfection. The old hermit answered: "To become perfect, my son, it is not sufficient to desire it; one must labour to attain it. Now so very few reach perfection because they do not mortify themselves, nor curb their evil inclinations."

THE DUTIES OF OUR STATE

Fidelity to the duties of our state is really the santification of our actions. Our Lord gave us a notable example of this conformity to duty. As Bossuet said: Jesus, though He was God as well as man, handled the saw and the plane. The valiant woman of Scripture turned the spindle with her fingers and wove the wool. The Apostles, even after they were called, laboured as fishermen, and St. Paul was a tent-maker. All these pleased God in accepting willingly and performing earnestly the duties of their state. God wills our personal sanctification by the performing of the duties of our condition, our age, profession, and even our social position.

—*F. X. McGowan, O. S. A.*

KNOWLEDGE OF SELF

For advance to the heights of spiritual perfection an intimate knowledge of self is necessary. The Psalmist indicates the method of gaining such a knowledge in the direction he gives to our thoughts towards the past and the future. The duty of introspection is indeed a duty of the present moment, but the motives of it are drawn from the time that has fled and the years that are to come.

"I thought of the days of old." Whatever other meaning may be attached to these words, we can at least take them in their most obvious signification as relating to the past life of the speaker.

Our own past, "the days of old," is indeed the best guide to fruitful knowledge of ourselves. What an educator that past is! To consider even the brief space of the year which is now ending, what a revelation of our own capabilities and our own delinquencies it brings to us! Our own life is before us, as a plain viewed from a commanding height. "The days of old," the year that is now closing brings before us the good we have performed, and the evil for which, perhaps, we have grieved; the strength too seldom manifested and the too frequent weakness of will; the noble resistance to temptation and again the too ready yielding; the conquest over sin, a rare triumph, and the many defeats. If the thought of these serve for anything, it must serve to impress upon us the dangers to which we are now liable and will be liable in the future. Such a knowledge, to the honest soul, is half the battle. We can guide our steps aright to-day by the gravestones that lie above our failures of the past.—*Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

NO SECURITY IN THIS LIFE

And no man must be sure in this life, which is all named a temptation (Job. vii.) lest, as he may have been made of worse better, so he may become of better worse. Our only hope, our only confidence, our only security is Thy mercy.—*St. Augustine.*

UNCERTAINTY OF SALVATION

St. Isidore had begun to serve God in his childhood, and had served Him faithfully during the whole of his life; yet he was never seen to smile, and was always sad. One of his disciples once said to him: "Father Isidore, why are you always so sad? You always seem full of fear, as if some terrible evil were about to fall upon you." "My son," he answered, "I am afraid that I may not persevere to the end, and that my soul may be lost." "But you have always tried to serve God," said his disciple; "why, then should you be so much afraid, since God has promised Heaven to those who serve Him faithfully?" The Saint answered: "When a poor man is expecting to receive a rich legacy or a great fortune and is afraid that something may arise to deprive him of it, how can he have an easy mind? It is only when the inheritance is given him that he can be free from anxiety. So it is with me. I have not yet received the crown of glory, and as long as I am in this world I am in danger of losing it."

There are just men and wise men, and their works are in the Hand of God; and yet man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred.—But all things are kept uncertain for the time to come, because all things equally happen to the just and to the wicked, to the good and to the evil, to the clean and to the unclean, to him that offereth victims and to him that despiseth sacrifices.

—*Eccl.* IX, 1-2

OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW SPIRITUALLY

Every day, almost every moment, there are granted to man opportunities to grow spiritually, to advance the soul toward that for which it thirsts, union with God. Yet, how many of these

opportunities are heeded? In the great question of eternal life itself the common word is: "I shall put off attending to that until to-morrow. To-morrow will be time enough."

—*Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

GRADUAL PROGRESS

It has been a commonly accepted principle in the physical world that nature does not go by leaps. And most true is the principle and its application to the spiritual order. If we put aside the penitent thief, Mary Magdalene, and St. Paul, who were quasi-exceptions proving the general law, those who have come to be the great Saints of the Church, the pillars and ground of truth, as it were, have grown in the odour of sanctity and the perfume of virtue step by step; the Vincents de Paul and the Francis' de Sales have slowly, but surely, added cubits to their spiritual heights, and they have ripened in their season and in their time as the luscious fruit in the vineyard of the Lord.—*J. W. Sullivan.*

NOT TO ADVANCE IS TO RECEDE

St. Augustine said: "We cannot prevent ourselves from going backwards, except by forcing ourselves to go forwards. The moment that we desist from our efforts, we fall back. Not to advance is to recede. Hence, if we do not wish to go backwards, we must push on without ever giving ourselves a moment of repose." Other Fathers liken the Christian in this world to a man seated in a boat on a swiftly flowing river. As long as he plies the oars, he makes some progress—the progress of at least not going backwards; but the moment he ceases to labour, he is carried down the stream.

WORLDLY BENEFITS MAY NOT BE OF ADVANTAGE TO OUR SOUL

A poor blind man made a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Thomas of Canterbury. He went there to ask through the prayers of the Saint the recovery of his sight. His prayer was granted, and he returned home cured. When the first transports of joy were over, he remembered that in his prayer to the Saint he had omitted to add these words: "If it should be the will of God," or "if God should see that it would be useful for my salvation." So he returned to the Saint's tomb, and said: "O great St. Thomas, I thank thee for the favour thou hast obtained for me from God. But if the use of my eyes should prove hurtful to me, or should endanger my eternal salvation, I humbly ask of thee to make me blind again." At the same moment he once more lost the use of his eyes, and became blind as before. He spent the rest of his days in preparing for a happy death, and when that day came it found him ready.

EQUALITY BEFORE GOD

A holy hermit had spent so many years in the practice of prayer and penance that he began to imagine he was the holiest person in the world. While he was thinking of this, God made known to him that he was mistaken, and that he was not nearly so far advanced in perfection, and in the love of God, as a certain poor waiting-maid in a hotel in the city. This astonished the good hermit. "How can it be possible," he said to himself, "that a simple servant can be

equal to me in virtue, since I have done nothing else for many years but fast and pray continually? I must go and visit her, and ask her what she does that makes her more agreeable in the eyes of God than I am." So he went to the city, and easily found the person of whom he was in search. He told her what God had revealed to him and asked her to let him know what great practices of piety she performed that made her more perfect than he was. "My Father," she replied, "I do not know what God can see in me that can please Him so much; I am only a poor simple waiting-maid and I have no learning. All that I can say is that I endeavour to perform all my actions with the greatest care, in order that I may please God and do His blessed will. When I am carrying wood for the kitchen fire, I think of the love of Jesus in carrying His Cross for me, and I tell Him that I love Him because He is so good; and in all my other works I always try to think of Him in some way or other." The hermit returned home, thanking God for having put it in the power of even the simplest and lowliest of His children to love Him as much, and sometimes even more than those who have consecrated themselves entirely to His service.

A SAINT IN THE WORLD

St. Catherine of Genoa, though living in the midst of the world and of its attractions, led the life of a religious in a convent. One day a member of a religious Order said to her: "Why do you not renounce the world altogether, and embrace the religious life? when retired from the world and its surroundings, you could love God more fervently, and serve Him with greater devotion." She answered: "Are we not best in the place to which God has called us? Until this time no creature or any created thing has been able to hinder me from loving God as much as I wished and as much as I was able."

JOY

There is a joy, which is not given to the wicked, but to them that freely worship thee, whose joy Thou Thyself art. And this is beatitude, or a happy life, to rejoice to Thee, in Thee, and for Thee: this is it, for there is no other. But they that think there is some other beatitude, seek after some other joy which is not true, and yet they will still follow some image, at least, or resemblance of joy.—*St. Augustine.*

You shall be glad and rejoice for ever in these things, which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and the people thereof joy.—*Is.* LXV, 18.

Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.
—*Ps.* XXXV, 10

THE WAY TO JOYFULNESS

To obtain the spirit of Christian joyfulness, we must carefully preserve in our hearts His sanctifying grace. Next, we must constantly praise and thank God; and, thirdly, we must use our hearties

endeavours to *be* joyful in the Lord. There is an adage which says that "No one knows what he can do till he tries," and so it is with this duty of Christian joy. If we *try* to rejoice in the Lord, we shall find that our troubles will lose their bitterness, and be changed into sources of grace and merit before God.—*H. G. Hughes.*

THE SOURCE OF HAPPINESS

It is idle to seek happiness in affairs of the world. We are told that Alexander sought happiness in *conquest;* Caesar's idea was *power;* that of Croesus, *wealth;* Solomon only thought of *wisdom,* Sardanapalus of *pleasure,* and Plato of *intellectual culture,* and yet these men did not find happiness.

SPIRITUAL JOY

There is one means of overcoming our foe, namely, spiritual joy, and the abiding consciousness of a soul that is in the grace of God and which, dispelling as smoke the childish suggestions of the foe, follows up in pursuit instead of shrinking back in fear.—*St. Anthony.*

At all times and under all circumstances, however trying, it is the duty of a Christian to strive after the spirit of thanksgiving; after a holy cheerfulness and a serene joy. It is one of the chief works of the Saints and of holy persons that they are always cheerful, even under the greatest trials. You have heard of that holy religious whose constant saying, whatever happened, was *"Deo gratias," "Thanks be to God,"* so that amongst his fellow-monks he went by the name of "Brother *Deo Gratias.*" In this habit he imitated St. Paul, who, writing to the Corinthians, exclaims, "I am filled with comfort, I exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulation" (II Cor. vii, 4), and of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles that he and Silas, having been beaten with many stripes, and thrust into an inner prison with their feet in the stocks, prayed and praised God aloud, so that the voice of their praise was heard at midnight by all that were in prison.—*H. G. Hughes.*

THE WISDOM OF THE CRUCIFIX

When St. Bonaventure was teaching theology in Paris, and was drawing upon himself the admiration of everyone by his learned writings, it happened that St. Thomas of Aquin went to see him one day. He asked him to show him the books out of which he drew so much profound learning. St. Bonaventure led him into the little room where he studied, and showed him a few ordinary books that lay upon the table. But St. Thomas told him that there must be other books from which he drew his deep learning. The Saint then showed him a little oratory, in which was suspended a crucifix. "This, my Father, is my only other book; it is the principal one I use, and from which I learn all that I teach and all that I write. Yes, it is in casting myself upon my knees at the foot of the crucifix, and in praying here for light in my difficulties and doubts, that I have made more progress in the sciences, and have obtained more true knowledge, than I should have done by reading all the books in the world."

THE LESSON OF THE CROSS

St. Vincent, having for a long time in vain exhorted a hardened sinner to repent before he should meet his Judge, gave him one day a little picture representing our Saviour falling under the weight of His Cross. "Take this little picture, my friend," he said to him, "and keep it in remembrance of the words I have just spoken to you, and, as a favour, I beg of you to promise me that you will look at it for a few minutes every night before retiring to rest and think at the same time of the sufferings which Jesus endured for you when He carried His Cross and fell so frequently under it. You will then say to yourself: 'How long shall I, by my sins, leave Him to lie under the heavy Cross? How long shall I see him suffering for me, without freeing Him from them, since it is in my power?'" When the Saint returned to visit him he found him entirely changed. "O my Father," he said, "I could get no peace when I thought of my Saviour suffering when it was in my power to relieve Him. So I am resolved to sin no more, and to make up by my good life for the time to come for all that I have caused Jesus to suffer by my sins."

RESISTING PASSIONS

It is then by resisting our passions, that we are to find true peace of heart, and not by being slaves to them.

There is no peace, therefore, in the heart of a carnal man, nor in a man that is addicted to outward things, but only in a fervent spiritual man.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE BURDEN OF LIFE

An old man was walking along the road with a heavy load of fire-wood on his shoulders. As he was old and feeble, as well as hungry, his strength gave way, and he fell down on the ground beside his burden. "Oh," he cried, "is there no one to help me? My children are cold and hungry at home, and I am not able to reach them to give them what they need." A young man who was passing by heard these words, and, coming up to him, said: "Do not worry yourself about your burden, my friend; I will help you. But first let us rest and eat something." Saying this, he produced bread, meat, and wine, and they both ate and drank. When the meal was finished, the young man bade his aged companion good-bye and went away. The old man stood surprised and disappointed. "I thought that he was going to help me to carry my heavy burden," he said, "and he has gone off and left me alone." With a heavy heart he stooped to lift it up, when, to his surprise, he found he could carry it with ease. The food the young man had given him had refreshed him so much that he had now sufficient strength to carry his burden. So it is with the grace of God. It does not take away from us the burden of life, but it gives us strength to bear it.

THERE SHALL BE NO ALPS

When Napoleon contemplated the conquest of a people beyond the Alps, and discussed with confidence the expedition with his army

one of his staff said: "But, Sire, remember the Alps." Napoleon calmly answered, with words that thrilled those who listened: "For Napoleon and his army there shall be no Alps." And thus his indomitable will, his splendid courage and military genius spurred his legions on as though no obstacle lay between him and his desire. It were well if men could manifest this same courage, confidence, and enthusiasm in a higher and nobler cause; if we could all, moving on the enemies of righteousness, spur on our efforts unmindful of the difficulties and obstacles which now too often discourage us!

SILENCE! HERE IS BERNARDINE

When St. Bernardine was a little boy, he was so good and innocent that his companions looked on him with reverence. They never said an unbecoming word when he was with them, and if they saw him approaching when they were speaking in that way, they immediately ceased, saying one to the other: "Silence! here is Bernardine." If the presence of a holy child had so much influence on his companions, how much greater should be the influence on us of the thought of God's presence.

BLESSED THOMAS MORE'S FIDELITY

Thomas More was Lord High Chancellor of England in the reign of King Henry VIII. He was a fervent Catholic, and, although zealous in the service of his king, was still more so in the service of God. When Henry rebelled against the Church, he put into prison and even condemned to death those who would not acknowledge him to be head of the Church. When he informed Sir Thomas More of the law he had made, requiring his subjects to submit to his authority in spiritual things, Sir Thomas replied that he for one would never obey it, "because," he said, "it is against the law of God."

This answer put the king into a great passion, and he ordered him to be immediately put into prison. "You shall see," he said, "that I am your master, and that you must do what I wish," "You have, indeed, power over my life, and over everything I have that passes away with life," replied the intrepid Thomas, "but more than that you have no power over." The king condemned him to death. But wishing to give him yet an opportunity of saving his life, he went to his wife, and persuaded her to go to her husband and to try and influence him. "O my husband," she said to him, "*do* obey the command of the king as others have done, and your life will be spared." "And how long, my dear wife," he answered—"how long do you think I shall live if I do what you ask me?" "For at least twenty years," she said. "Well, if you had said twenty thousand years, that would have been something; but it would, indeed, be a very poor thing to live even that number of years, and run the risk of losing my God in eternity!"

Thomas More died for the Faith on the scaffold on the sixth day of July, 1535.

THE FRAILTY OF HUMAN NATURE

St. Catherine, as well as all the other great Saints of God, saw clearly how weak and frail human nature is in itself, and that it can-

not do any good without the help of God's grace. "O my God," sh was frequently heard to say, "how very weak I am! If left to myself I cannot do any good in such a manner as to please Thee. Left t myself, I can only do what is wrong. Alas! what would become o me if Thou didst leave me without Thy grace?" When she fell int any venial fault—for even the just man "falls seven times"—sh would raise up her eyes to Heaven and exclaim, "This is anothe of the fruits that my garden produces," meaning that faults and sin are the natural productions of human nature if not supported by th grace of God.

WE OWE EVERY MERIT TO GOD'S GRACE

One day God was pleased to show to one of the disciples of S Francis the place he had prepared in Heaven for the great Saint It was high above the angels, even among the Seraphim who are s near the throne of God. Not long after this he met St. Francis, an said to him: "My father, would you be pleased to tell me what opinio you have of yourself, and of the good you have done." "My dea brother," he answered, "I believe that there is nowhere on the face o the earth so great a sinner as I am." "But, beloved father," answere the other, "how can you say that? or how can that be true? Ar there not murderers, and thieves, and other criminals in the worl who have been guilty of enormous crimes; how can you say, then that you are the greatest sinner on the face of the earth?" Th Saint answered: "Of one thing I am certain, that if these criminal of whom you speak had received from God the same graces I hav received, they would be infinitely more holy, and more grateful t God than I have been. And I am also certain that if God had for a instant left me to myself, I would have fallen into greater sins tha they have committed, and would have become the greatest sinner i the whole world."

MAN CAN FALL BY HIMSELF, BUT NOT RISE AGAIN BY HIMSELF

A man can of himself cause his fall, but he can not of himsel cause his reformation.—*Albertus Magnus.*

USE OF THE TONGUE

When Father Angelo of Montelone was on his death-bed, hi superior told him to make known to his brethren in religion for thei edification what he considered to be the greatest grace he had eve received from God. Father Angelo, in his humility, was troubled a this command, but not wishing to infringe his vow of obedience, h answered: "My brothers, the greatest favour which I have ever re ceived from God is this: For the past thirty years of my life ther has never fallen from my lips one word that was useless."

THE GATE OF THE TONGUE

One of the brethren of the monastery over which the holy Abbo Sisois presided said to him: "My father, I desire to keep a guar on my heart." The Abbot answered: "How can you guard you heart, and preserve it from dangers, if you allow the gate of you tongue to be always open? The great business of your life should b to keep a guard upon your lips."

AN AGREEMENT WITH THE TONGUE

St. Francis de Sales was on one occasion grossly insulted by a young man. The Saint calmly listened to the young man and said not a word after the young man had finished his abusive speech. When some friends of the Saint remonstrated with him for suffering so meekly these insults, and without taking the youth to task, St. Francis answered: "I have made an agreement with my tongue that it must not speak as long as my heart is disturbed and excited. Only then when it is calm again do I permit myself to speak or to act."

THE THREE GREAT WORDS

In the lives of the members of the Order of St. Dominic, we read of one who was famous for his eloquence, and for the zeal with which he preached the Holy Word of God. "God made me to serve Him," he used to say. "Show me then, dearest Lord, how I am to do so most perfectly, for this is the greatest, the only desire of my heart," God was pleased with the fervour of this holy man, and answered his prayer. As he was one day before the altar, pouring out his whole soul in the presence of God, and saying with more than usual fervour this little prayer, "O my God, what must I do to save my soul?" he heard a voice near him which answered him in these words: "*Believe! Accomplish! Employ!*" For a few minutes he repeated them to himself, trying to find out what they meant. But the more he thought over them the more difficult they seemed to be. "O my God, make known to me the meaning of these words, for how can I understand them unless Thou dost explain them to me?" This time, also, God was pleased to answer him. He heard the same voice again; it said: "My son, *Believe* all that God has revealed to you, *Accomplish* all that He has appointed to be done, by keeping His holy commandments, *Employ* the means He has given you to enable you to become holy and to reach Heaven."

CHAPTER VII

SIN

WHAT IS SIN?

Sin is defined as an offense against God or His law. Let us see what it is that constitutes an act into an offense against God. It is plain that an attack on God by disbelieving His word or blaspheming His name is an offense against Him; and the same with disobedience to commands which He has given. If He has commanded a certain service at a certain time, or if He has bidden us abstain from the fruit of such a tree, or from labour on such a day, the forbidden action, though in itself not bad, becomes so because of the disobedience. But these classes do not embrace the whole multitude of sins. There are other things which are intrinsically evil without being obvious attacks on God. Even if there were no prohibition given, they would still be evil. God has forbidden them because there is an intrinsic evil in them that belongs to their nature. Such, for instance, are pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, sloth. What is there at the root of these capital sins which makes them evil in themselves, seeing that they do not seem overtly to attack God? It is this, that they are disorder.

This may seem, perhaps, a very moderate expression to use concerning a thing which is otherwise described as rebellion against God, base ingratitude, cruelty to our suffering Redeemer, foulness, falling below the brutes, and such like. But the word "disorder" embraces all this and much more. It is not merely untidiness or disarrangement of position, which is the first idea that the sound of the word brings before the mind. But "disorder" is an adequate description of all that is evil. Peace, beauty, usefulness, depend on the harmony of the component parts of a thing; destroy this harmony, and at once the thing has lost a portion of its proper perfection and become bad. All things that God has made are good; evil arises from disorder introduced into their relations toward themselves, or toward their surroundings. What are all the horrible forms of painful disease that affect us but some disarrangements of bodily functions—digestion, of nerves, or blood, or brain? What are all the mental troubles—terror, melancholy, anxiety, unreason, insanity—but some disorder of the due harmony of mental faculties? Even things good in themselves may become horrible to us if merely disordered in position or in colour.

—*Bishop Bellord*

If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither: and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire and he burneth.—*John* XV, 6.

God spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them, drawn down by infernal ropes to the lower hell, unto torments, to be reserved unto judgment.—II *Peter* II, 4.

The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: he that followeth justice is beloved by Him.—Prov. XV, 9.

The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God. They are corrupt, and are become abominable in their ways; there is none that doth good, no, not one.—Ps. XIII, 1.

The hope of the wicked is as dust which is blown away with the wind, and as a thin froth which is dispersed by the storm: and a smoke that is scattered abroad by the wind: and as a remembrance of a guest of one day that passeth by.—Wisd. V, 15.

He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, both are abominable before God.—Prov. XVII, 15.

By what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is tormented.
—Wisd. XI, 17.

What wouldst thou ask, or learn of us? We are ready to die rather than to transgress the laws of God, received from our fathers.
—II Mach. VII, 2.

SIN, THE GREATEST OF EVILS

Of St. John Chrysostom it is said that his severe criticisms of the evils of his times greatly displeased certain people in high positions. These persons took counsel among themselves as to how they might silence this preacher, who so courageously exposed their vicious life. Various suggestions were made, such as confiscating his property, throwing him into a dungeon, expelling him from the country, even putting him to death. But one of the men present spoke up and said "all these things would not be considered punishment by this reckless preacher; property he has none, he gave all he had to the poor; throwing him into a dungeon or otherwise injuring his person would but cause him to rejoice, as he then would consider himself to suffer for Christ's sake. The only way to punish this man, and to cause him grief, will be to lead him into sin, for sin is what he fears most."

Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him that can destroy both soul and body into hell.—Matt. X, 28.

THE SIN OF THE ANGELS

Why did God, in the fulness of His infinite wisdom, resolve to come down and die in agony to rescue mankind, while He condemned the angels at once and without pity to the eternal fires of hell?

The angels were treated differently from man because the whole circumstances in the two cases were entirely different and God's justice and goodness induced Him to take every circumstance into account. We will point out the chief of these differences.

I. In the first place, the sin of the angels was, considered in itself, a *greater* sin. Why? Because the gravity of an offense depends not merely on the nature of the sinful act, considered by itself, but depends also upon the greater or lesser clearness with which its

gravity is realized by the culprit. Now, the angels had a more perfect knowledge of the infinite Majesty of God than it was possible for man to have. They realized in a manner far surpassing man's capacity the enormity of the offense they were guilty of in rebelling against their infinite Creator and Benefactor. Hence, their crime was more unpardonable, inasmuch as they sinned against a greater light and with a deeper knowledge. Man, of course, had knowledge enough and more than enough. He knew perfectly well that to disobey God was a serious matter and deserving of punishment. But he had not the keen, penetrating, subtle intellect of the angels. He had not the clear and precise conception of God's Divine attributes, nor the deep and unmistakable appreciation of His claims upon his loyalty and submission, and, as a consequence, though undoubtedly guilty, our first parents were not so guilty, nor quite so utterly unworthy of all consideration, as were the rebel angels. This, then, may be taken as the first reason why they were actually treated with less rigour.

II. But there is a second reason; and that is to be found in the fact that the angels had none to tempt them but fell by reason of their own deliberate and personal choice. With man it was quite different. In fact, it would seem that, if left to himself, he might perhaps never have fallen at all. He did not stretch out his hand and eat the forbidden fruit unsolicited and uninvited. His downfall was contrived and brought about by the cunning and the deliberate efforts of one immeasurably more powerful and more sagacious.

III. There is a third reason why man should be shown mercy rather than the angels, and that reason is to be found in the fact that, with the immense multitude of mankind, the sin which brought about their misery and condemnation was not a personal sin at all. It was the sin of their first parents. The descendants of Adam and Eve were indeed guilty, but their guilt was inherited. They received it from their father and mother.—*Bishop John S. Vaughan.*

A PICTURE OF MORTAL SIN

Suppose a child to insult and disown his parents, to disgrace their name, to commit such an offense that there can be no more love, wilfully to leave his father's house and scornfully to trample upon the affection he owes to those who brought him into the world, treating them with the utmost disrespect and contumely. That is a picture of mortal sin.—*H. G. Hughes.*

Soldiers who have fought in the battles of the great European War state that among the dreadful scenes of the battle-field one of the most terrifying and ghastly sights was that of a dead rider charging on a madly racing horse, and dashing to certain destruction. When the rider received the mortal wound he instinctively took a vise-like grip upon his horse and thus was carried unresistingly along by his frantic mount. A picture of the soul in mortal sin.

THE SOUL IN MORTAL SIN

One day a holy monk was favoured by the vision of his Angel

Guardian walking at his side. As they were going along, they came upon the carcass of a dead animal lying by the wayside. The stench which came from it was so great that the good man could not endure it. He put his hand upon his nostrils, and hurried past the place as fast as he could. But the angel did not seem to mind it at all. After a little while they saw a young man coming towards them. He was dressed in the highest style of fashion, and was of a beautiful and pleasing appearance. As soon as the angel saw this man he showed signs of greatest abhorrence, and tried to get past him as fast as he could, keeping his eyes turned in an opposite direction, that he might not see him. The monk asked the angel why he showed no signs of disgust when he passed the dead animal and seemed to feel so much horror when he met the well-dressed young man. The angel answered: "The smell and the sight of the dead animal was indeed bad; but if you could see, as we angels can, the frightful state of that young man's soul, for he is guilty of mortal sin, you would die of fright."

THE STATE OF MORTAL SIN

Prince Damocles, who was very ambitious, thought that there was no one so happy as a king. "Oh, I wish I were a king!" he was often heard to say. "I would then be rich, and have no cares or sorrows, and I would live in perfect happiness." King Dionysius heard this, and to teach him a lesson, he one day said to him: "Since you think my dignity to be so full of happiness, I will permit you for a time to rule in my place." So Damocles was placed on a throne of gold, and clad in robes of the finest texture. Servants attending to all his wants, and everything that his heart desired was given to him. Fortune now seemed to smile on him, and he thought his happiness complete. But one day he happened to raise his eyes, and saw suspended over his head a sharp sword. It hung by a single thread, and if that thread broke he would most certainly be killed. He became pale and was afraid to move lest he might in doing so cause the slender thread to break, and sat on his rich throne as immovable as a statue, crying out to someone to come and take away the sword. By the king's order this was not immediately done, and Damocles was almost dead from fear.

Those who are in mortal sin are in even greater danger: they are hanging over the abyss of hell; all that keeps them from falling into it is the slender thread of life.

DEATH RATHER THAN MORTAL SIN

When Queen Blanche became the mother of St. Louis, she received him from God as a treasure to be guarded with the utmost care. From his earliest years she kept one great thought before his mind—to love above all things his Heavenly Father, and never to offend Him by sin. Often when the little boy was playing by her side, or sitting on her knee, she would say to him: "My dear child, God knows how much I love you; no mother could ever love her son more than I love you, yet sooner would I see you lying dead at my feet than know that you had offended God by a mortal sin."

A PICTURE OF VENIAL SIN

There is an immense difference between mortal and venial si Children, in the thoughtlessness and carelessness of youth, ofte commit small offenses of disobedience or petulance or slight di respect against their parents. A parent is justly displeased at thi but he would not think of disowning or banishing a child for suc offenses. Yet he rightly demands that the child shall express sorro and ask pardon and try to do better. That is a picture of veni sin.—*H. G. Hughes.*

There is no just man upon earth that doth good, and sinne not.—Eccl. VII, 21.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and th truth is not in us.—If we confess our sins, He is faithful and jus to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity.
—I *John* I, 8-

A just man shall fall seven times, and shall rise again.
—*Prov.* XXIV, 1

In many things we all offend.—James III, 2.

There was once a girl who worked in a factory. The day's wo was nearly done, and it was time to go home. She saw on h dress some white lint, and she stooped down to brush it off. As sh bent forward the quickly revolving machinery caught her hair an in a moment she was drawn in among the wheels and crushed t death.

It was by a few hairs only that she was at first caught. Yo may think it would have been easy to have broken them and s escape. But no; while each hair is slight of itself, many togeth are stronger than a rope. So it is with venial sins.

A SOUL IN VENIAL SIN

Father Alphonsus Rodriguez relates that there was a holy ma who desired to know himself as he realiy was in the eyes of Go "O my God," he prayed, "be pleased to show me my soul just as is in Thy holy sight." God heard his prayer and showed him h soul, which, though free from grievous sin, was nevertheless stain with venial faults. The sight of it filled his heart with so mu disgust that he could not bear to look at it, but immediately cri out: "O my God, do not show me my soul again, when there a venial sins upon it, otherwise I shall faint from fear."

SINS OF THOUGHT MORE DANGEROUS THAN SINS OF DEED

The Council of Trent commissioned priests to impress upon t faithful the fact that sins of thought are likely to injure the soul f more than even sin in deed, and are more dangerous than si committed by exterior action. (*Trid. Sess.* 14, *de Poenit.* c. 5). It often either impossible or at least very difficult to commit sin deed, whilst sins of thought may be committed without the le

difficulty, at all hours, in all places, and thus the soul may by impure thought become so inextricably involved that it goes inevitably to eternal ruin.

RELAPSE INTO SIN

Besides inspiring God with disgust and thus rendering the sinner's return to favour a matter of great difficulty, a relapse exposes him to another danger springing from himself. It strips of much of their force the aids to repentance, and by weakening man's will-power decreases his ability to resist evil. What was it that, with the coöperation of God's grace, enabled him to cast off the servitude holding him captive under the dominion of the devil? The light of God's countenance shone upon his darkened conscience, and he saw the turpitude of sin, its deformity, its ingratitude; the gift of heavenly grace was poured into his heart; the Holy Spirit of God was infused into him; the Bread of Angels was bestowed upon him to feed, to nourish and to give him the pledge of glorious things promised in the life to come. He has enjoyed all these privileges; he has made use of all these helps; he has thus been able to burst asunder the bands holding him captive. Knowing this, and considering the happy estate of his former slave, the devil, as we saw, returns reinforced by spirits of evil more wicked, more subtle than himself, to pervert the will that, by the grace of God, had been turned to good. If the soul should yield to his assault, what will then be able to enlighten the intelligence, to stir the heart, to move the will? The means that previously helped it have lost much of their power.—*F. C. Doyle, O. S. B.*

IN THE SERVICE OF SATAN

St. Cyprian depicts Satan stealing into the midst of a congregation and saying to the Lord in the tabernacle of the altar: "I bore no scourging for these; I bore no cross; I shed no blood; I hate, not love them; I shall torture, not reward them; yet, though nominally and outwardly they are Thy servants, how many of them secretly and in heart are mine? See what gifts they lavish upon me. See how they pour out upon my altars the libation of their youth, their purity and their honour. See with what eager effort they pursue the ends that I inspire. Point out to me, O Christ, such servitors of Thine."

THE IRREPARABLE LOSS OF A LIFE SPENT IN SIN

The loss of a single moment is irreparable. There is no such thing as retracing our steps. There is no such thing as recalling lost moments. It is possible that the sins of years may be wiped out by a moment's repentance. It is possible that the one last moment of our lives, profited by, may atone for years of abuse and loss. Blessed for ever be the Precious Blood of our Divine Lord. It buys for us eternity even when we have squandered time. But yet that time is really lost. The stores of merit we might have accumulated during those years are lost; we gain Heaven, but the light with which God crowns us is faint and dim instead of being intensified into burning brightness by our merits. Like a man snatched from a violent

death, we tremble and creep in terror to the feet of God, instead of rising buoyantly, securely, confidently to that throne which the Precious Blood has purchased for us, and which we have adorned with the gold of our penance and the pearls of our contrite tears.

—P. A. Sheehan.

THE FORCE OF HABIT

Custom in time renders incurable a thing which might at first have been easily rooted.—*St. Ignatius.*

It is a proverb: A young man according to his way, even when he is old he will not depart from it.—Prov. XXII, 6.

A WASTED INHERITANCE

There was a poor man who from morning to night laboured to procure food for himself and his little ones. But it happened that a distant relative died, and left him sole heir of all his property; so that from being poor he suddenly became rich, and his children, instead of being obliged to lead a laborious life, would inherit a great fortune, which would provide for all their wants, and raise them to a high position in the world. Great was the joy of these children at their good fortune and their future prospects. But it did not last long; for their father, seeing so much money in his possession, and wishing to gain still more, rashly engaged in a foolish undertaking. In a short time he lost all his fortune, and was reduced to a more pitiable condition than before. His children, who expected to inherit so much wealth, saw themselves reduced to beggary by their father's fault; and after his death they were obliged to wander over the world, without a home to shelter them, and to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. Our first parents by their sin lost the inheritance of Heaven, which God gave them, and we, their children, were involved in the consequences.

SIN OUR ONLY REAL ENEMY

Sin is the only enemy we really have to fear. To convince ourselves of that, all we need do is to ask ourselves the following questions: What is that which alone can blast our whole career? Rob us of God? Deprive us of Heaven? And fling us headlong into the bottomless pit? What is it that alone has the power to chain us down, amid the quenchless flames of hell, forever and ever, as long as God is God? There is literally but one thing, and that is sin. Yes. No other enemy can work us such evil. Sin, and only sin, possesses this awful power. Sin can do it. Sin has done it. Sin is doing it every day. Sin, in short, is the very root and source of all our misery, and of all our misfortune.

But what is sin? What is its nature? From what hellish soil does it spring? Of what diabolical parent is sin born? Ah! It springs from the spirit of self-love. It is born of self-indulgence, it can flourish in no other soil. And what is its connection with penance? Well! it is the exact contrary. It is its antagonist, its most inveterate enemy. One is, in short, the antipode of the other.

—Bishop John S. Vaughan.

MAN NOT FORCED TO SIN

No man is forced to sin; no man *must* be vile. Nor, again, *must* any man, by sheer innate force of virtue, attain to life everlasting; nor *must* any man of necessity stay under the shadow of God's law. No one has ever attained so high a degree of sanctity but that there was the possibility of a fall; no one has ever sunk so low, but that it has been possible for him to rise. *Judas* was an apostle, the *Magdalene* a harlot; yet the one betrayed his Lord and afterward went "to his own place," while the other washed away her sins in the tears of her strong penitence and adoring love, and was found to the last at the foot of the Cross.—*W. R. Carson.*

What the hail is to fruit, what the blast of the storm is to the trees, what a raging plague is to the herds of cattle, what a furious hurricane is the bark at sea, such is sin to its victims. It destroys the fruits of the good works, it corrupts the faculties of the world, it plunges the whole man into destruction.—*St. Augustine.*

A PECULIARITY OF SIN

This is the sad peculiarity of sin that we can not deal with it as we would with other difficulties that cross our path. A man may have naturally a strong, unbending will in every affair of life, and yet fall again and again into some sin which he despises from his heart and which he knows to be robbing him of his manhood and his self-respect. He resolved that he will conquer it—only perhaps on that very day to succumb to the first assault. The whole nature may grow and expand; the will become stronger and more resolute, and side by side with this development of intellectual and moral powers we find an increasing spiritual deterioration, sensual and sinful.

—*W. R. Carson.*

EVIL CAN GROW ONLY IN GOOD SOIL

The soil that produces evil is itself good; for a bad soil produces nothing. Evil is the absence of full perfection in that which is good by nature, not the presence of something which is strange and hurtful. Evil can only exist in what is good—it has no substantive existence of its own. You can feel pain only in a living and active nerve; you can feel sorrow only in a soul that desires its legitimate and natural satisfaction. There is no nerve that can feel only pain; there is no soul that can do nothing but suffer—its very suffering is the indication of its natural and healthy desire and capacity for happiness.—*A. B. Sharpe.*

SHOULD GOD PREVENT ALL SIN?

Should He force the sinner's will and compel him to love truth and goodness? It is a contradiction in terms—a forced and unwilling love! It is no favour to man to force upon him that which is best for him but which he abhors. The sinner in hell will certainly never reproach God for this; for does not every sinner pride himself especially on his independence, and resist what he calls an encroachment upon it, even though it be to save him from eternal woe?

—*Bishop Bellord.*

SIN MUST BE

Sin must needs be. We should be mere inanimate and ingloriou columns in the temple of God, there would be no such thing as mora excellence in us, no such thing as honourable service rendered t God, were we not absolutely free from all compulsion; and becaus we are free, we can sin and we do sin. The power of choosing Go involves the power of rejecting God. Some will be lost because a must have the power of being saved. Sin and punishment will be because of the natural endowments and the supernatural vocatio which God has given us. Yet God is in no sense the cause of sin an punishment. When the sun shines dark shadows fall for the ver reason that the sun is so bright; yet is the sun not the cause o shadows, but rather those obstacles which stand athwart its beams.

—Bishop Bellord

AN ACT RIGHT OR WRONG INTERNALLY ACCORDING TO THE INTENTIO

The same external act may be separately right or wrong, accord ing to the state of conscience of those who take part in it, or thei motives in so doing. The Roman soldiers who put our Lord to death acting in obedience to their officers and on the supposition that the were dealing with an ordinary Jewish criminal, were excusable. The merely did their duty as soldiers and state officials; whereas, th Jewish priests and people, knowing, or at least in duty bound to know that Christ was just, holy, and innocent, moved both by hatred an the desire of vengeance, were guilty of the crime of deicide.

—W. Graham

THE CONSEQUENCE OF ONE SIN

Adam and Eve were driven out of Paradise and forced to ear their bread in the sweat of their face; trials and troubles of all kind and finally death came upon them; their descendants, too, suffered th same punishment and no one could gain admission to God's presenc until God Himself became man to make satisfaction for the sins o men. All this was the consequence of one sin, and how many time have we sinned?—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

SENT TO HELL FOR THEIR FIRST SIN

Some have been cut off and sent to hell for their first sin. Thi was the case, as divines teach, as regards the rebel angels. Fo their first sin, and that a sin of thought, a single perfected act o pride, they lost their first estate, and became devils. And Saints an holy people record instances of men, and even children who in lik manner have uttered a first blasphemy or other deliberate sin, an were cut off without remedy. And a number of similar instance occur in Scripture; I mean of the lawful punishment of a single sin without respect to the virtue and general excellence of the sinne Adam, for a single sin, small in appearance, the eating of the for bidden fruit, lost Paradise, and implicated all his posterity in his ow ruin. The Bethsamites were irreverent towards the ark of the Lor and more than fifty thousand of them in consequence were smitte Oza touched it with his hand, as if to save it from falling, and h was struck dead on the spot for his rashness. The man of God fro Juda ate bread and drank water at Bethel, against the command o

God, and he was forthwith killed by a lion on his return. Ananias and Sapphira told one lie, and fell down dead almost as the words left their mouth. Who are we, that God should wait for our repentance any longer, when He has not waited at all before He cut off those who sinned less than we?—*Cardinal Newman.*

NO ONE SAFE

How can any one consider himself safe who remembers that Judas lived among the Apostles and conversed and associated with our Lord, received particular graces, listened to Divine advice, and yet was lost. —*St. Theresa.*

THE DOUBLE CHAIN

Before we fall into sin the enemy labours to blind us, that we may not see the evil we do and the ruin we bring upon ourselves by offending God. After we commit sin, he seeks to make us dumb, that, through shame, we may conceal our guilt in confession. Thus, he leads us to hell by a double chain, inducing us, after our transgressions, to consent to a still greater sin—the sin of sacrilege! —*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

THE RULING PASSION

The devil is constantly endeavouring to find out the passion which rules in our heart, and the pleasures which have the greatest attraction for us. When he discovers them he presents occasions for indulging them: he then excites concupiscence, and prepares a chain to make us the slaves of hell.—*St. Ambrose.*

A SINFUL LIFE DESTRUCTIVE OF FAITH

A sinful life is positively and directly destructive of faith. Pride, covetousness and lust, especially, are blinding to the soul, and render it incapable of grasping truths of the spiritual order. The sinner himself may not think such a thing possible. He takes his faith as being like ordinary knowledge and certainty, and supposes that a vicious life can no more impair faith than it interferes with the knowledge of natural truths. But the case is different. Sin does not always destroy the firmness of our grasp of truth, but it has a tendency to do so, and at the present day it is particularly likely to do so. It would not be difficult to show that each of the capital sins has a close connection with belief. These sins do not interfere with the intellectual faculties; they do not impugn the grounds of faith; any particular man who falls into them does not necessarily lose his belief in revelation. But when one of these sins prevails through a large community, when it goes on for a generation or two, accumulating momentum and working out its effects, there we find that the religious sense grows weaker and dies out.—*Bishop Bellord.*

THE TWO GREAT MYSTERIES

I have always thought that there are only two great mysteries in the world. They have nothing to do with science. Science is growing commonplace now. They are connected with man, and deal with him in his relations with his Creator and himself. One is the mystery of God's love and interest, never-ceasing, in man; and the other is the mystery of sin. One sin, a sin of disobedience, caused a God

of infinite goodness—a goodness that Saints called folly, so persisten was it in spite of continual disappointments and rebuffs—one sin o disobedience caused such a God to let loose on man a flood of miserie —war, famine, pestilence, the widow's wail, the orphan's tears, sick ness, poverty, shame, death, and, chiefest of all, sin—which has strewn the shores of our world with endless wrecks and has whirled many a soul into the vortex of hell.—*P. Sexton.*

THE BATTLE WITH VICES

We do not battle with vices to defeat them, but we battle with them in order not to be defeated.—*Seneca.*

SAFETY IN FLIGHT

Even Christ our Lord sought His safety in flight when Herod sought His life. If Almighty God did this, how much more should we flee from the danger that threatens the life of our soul.

—*St. Jerome*

OCCASIONS OF SIN

As long as we expose ourselves to the occasions of sin, the devil laughs at all our good purposes and promises made to God. The greatest care of the enemy is to induce us not to avoid evil occasions; for these occasions, like a veil placed before the eyes, prevent us from seeing either the lights received from God, or the eternal truths, or the resolutions we have made: in a word, they make us forget all, and as it were, force us into sin.—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

THE SINNER BIDS GOD TO DEPART

When the priest baptizes an infant, he commands the *demon* to depart from the soul: "Go out from him, unclean spirits, and make room for the Holy Ghost." But when a Christian consents to mortal sin, he says to *God:* "Depart from me; make room for the devil, whom I wish to serve."—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

LIGHT AND GRACE WITHDRAWN FROM OBSTINATE SINNERS

Certain it is that God does withdraw light and grace in considerable measure, if not entirely, from some obstinate sinners, in punishment of their persistent rejection of Him. God shrouds the truth in darkness from many who seek, but do not deserve to find. He darkens the understanding, so that it gropes about ineffectually and cannot distinguish truth from falsehood. Thus their opportunities of salvation are diminished, and they are confirmed in their course toward hell.

The Divine punishment is, as in other cases, the natural and direct consequence of the sin. If any faculty is neglected a man loses the use of it. A limb that is never used withers up. If memory, or speech, or eyesight be left without exercise, they are starved, and we lose the use of these powers. It is just the same with our spiritual faculties. They must have exercise if they are to remain vigorous. Disuse kills them, too. The eye which never looks on God's face becomes blind to Him; the ear which disregards His voice becomes deaf; the heart which never turns to Him in love grows cold and hard and unfit to love. "By what things a man sinneth, by the same also i

he tormented" (Wisd. xi, 7). Contempt of the supernatural life ends in, and is fitly punished by, incapacity for the spiritual life. Then the greatest graces are but like the dew on rugged mountain tops; nothing can soften these hearts; that which would have sanctified and saved another soul is to them the cause for an increase of responsibility and punishment.

When a soul is in this state it proclaims itself sincere, honest, conscientious in its rejection of God. It maintains that it is naturally so constituted as to be unable to take a religious view of things. If there is a God, He has veiled Himself so that He cannot be discovered. If there is such a thing as religious truth, it is so hidden that no just being could punish a man for being ignorant of it. Thus men speak. But this sincerity is of a sort that is no excuse; this ignorance, though at present invincible, is not blameless, for it was deliberately induced. What punishment could be more terrible than when God thus leaves His enemies to enjoy what they consider their triumph! What a terrible awakening will there be in death, seeing that it is so little expected! —*Bishop Bellord.*

ILLUSION OF THE SINNER

It is said of a very wealthy but very homely woman, that she would not tolerate in her house any mirrors. She did not want to be reminded of her homeliness, and desired to give herself to the illusion that in appearance she was agreeable, without taking chances of having this illusion destroyed by seeing her homeliness in a mirror. Thus the sinner avoids the scrutiny of his bad conscience and refuses to admit his hideous sins.

ACCEPTING GOD ONLY FORMALLY

A legend relates that Abraham's father was an image maker, and that one day Abraham broke all the images in the shop and then put the hammer into the hand of the biggest image. When he told his father that the big image had broken the little ones, his father said: "It is impossible; they can neither see nor move." Abraham replied: "Then they are not gods." Some Christians' faith in God resembles Abraham's father's faith in his idols. They accept God formally, but apparently have little faith that He actually sees and moves.

TEPIDITY

God revealed to Blessed Henry Suso, that for tepid souls, who are content with leading a life exempt from mortal sin, but who commit many deliberate venial sins, it is very difficult to preserve themselves in the state of grace.—The venerable Louis de Ponte used to say: "I commit many defects, but I never make peace with them."

Then shall they call upon Me, and I will not hear: they shall rise in the morning and shall not find Me:—Because they have hated instruction, and receive not the fear of the Lord.—Prov. I, 28-29.

SCEPTICISM

Scepticism is based on what is called indifference, but the very word indifference is a lie, and a shuffle. The sceptic is not indifferent,

he is only too much biased by considerations of present ease to do his duty. He is like a judge dismissing the jury and shutting up the court in order to escape the trouble and responsibility of a judgment. —*W. Lockhart.*

PRESUMPTION

WHAT IS PRESUMPTION?

Presumption is the false supposition or hope that God pardons those who continue in their sins *(St. Thomas Summa, II, II, qu.,* 21, *a., I),* the false belief that God will pardon one who refuses to amend his ways. Presumption is *not* present in the case of one who commits a sin with the intention to confess it and thus get pardoned for it. On the contrary such a one sins less than he would have done without thinking of his conversion. Hence, according to St. Albertus Magnus, Adam sinned less grievously: *Quia sub spe veniae peccavit.*

HOW PRESUMPTION IS COMMITTED

Presumption may be committed in two ways. A man who would hope for Heaven without the help of God, and supposes that his own efforts would gain salvation, would be guilty of the sin of presumption in a very extraordinary degree; and it is scarcely possible to think that any believer in God and Heaven would come to such a pass unless he were insane, and therefore irresponsible. The same may be said of anyone who should hope for salvation without repentance for past sin, or with obstinate perseverance in sin to the end. But there is a kind of presumption into which it is not impossible for a Christian to fall; though in this form the sin does not altogether destroy the virtue. It consists in this, that a man hopes for that which God has not promised, namely, space and time for repentance after continued unrepented sin—a death-bed repentance. We may not depend on this. "*Now* is the accepted time; *now* is the day of salvation."—*H. G. Hughes.*

PRESUMPTION, WHEN PRESENT AND WHEN NOT

A man is sinning—giving way to some sin that is habitual with him. He does not in the least mean to give up his sin—indeed, he means to sin again; but he entertains some vague notion of escape and pardon. This would be a sin of presumption, and the man's guilt in God's sight is increased thereby. But take the case of a man who, though sinning, does not intend to continue to sin; means to repent and confess and cease from sinning; hoping thereby to be reconciled to God. That is not presumption; and the man's guilt is not increased but diminished by these sentiments.—*H. G. Hughes.*

PRESUMPTION IN COURTING TEMPTATION

Presumption is also the inordinate self-trust, shown in placing ourselves in a position of temptation that we have no right to suppose our virtue capable of resisting.—*H. G. Hughes.*

DESPAIR AND PRESUMPTION, THE TWO CHIEF SINS AGAINST HOPE

Two sins are especially contrary to the virtue of hope. They are despair and presumption. In their extreme forms they destroy the virtue altogether, just as infidelity destroys faith, and, with it, hope as well. Despair is an act of the mind, consciously putting away all hope for salvation, or a loss of confidence in God's mercy and promises; so that a man says to himself, "It is impossible that I should be saved." A man may even go so far as to no longer desire salvation; and the great St. Thomas Aquinas tells us that this terrible state of mind is frequently the result of sins against the holy virtue of purity.—*H. G. Hughes.*

IMPURITY

IMMORALITY

This sin destroys holiness, impedes the workings of grace, it weakens reason, turns one wholly to sense, making man brutish, stupid, insensible. It disrupts domestic affections, robs man of his truest joys, runs on for life and is scarcely, if ever, shaken off. Why should not the love of youth be elevated by the desire to reproduce the happy homes of childhood's memory, why should not sisters be the ideals of modesty to brothers, why should not children be edified by the unbroken harmony of parents? There is no reason why, but the workings of that foul sin. No crime enslaves man more than that of impurity. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man he finds no rest, no ease till he returns. Not content with returning himself, he brings along seven other spirits more wicked than himself. The sinner's soul becomes the rendezvous of this horde, and the last state of this man is worse than the first. No crime involves man in greater misfortune mentally, morally and socially. No crime is more shameful, more productive of the insupportable sting and remorse of conscience. What is first done from frailty is soon committed with full consent and deliberation, and he who falls with anguish and remorse, in the end becomes a hardened sinner. Justly is it numbered among the seven capital sins, for it is the seminary of numberless other vices, of endless evils and is an unremitting enemy of salvation. It is, of all the sins to which we are prone, the most pernicious and destructive, the most filthy, the most abominable in God's sight. "By its fruits you shall know it."—*J. W. Sullivan.*

How repulsive it is in its true colours, how revolting it sounds when called by its true names, which we dare not mention! Conscious of this, its victims shrewdly veil it under false colours and call it by names that may not shock unsuspecting ears. And yet, though the world excuses the vice and tries to pass it off as a harmless pleasure, it still remains true that every man, even the sinner, despises the impure in heart. Who will receive into his home the sower of immorality, the smiling villain who is known to pour his vile suggestiveness into innocent ears, who is known to revel with the daughters of shame in the home of Satan? Trust the

sea with your tiny boat, trust fickle winds, trust the miser's generosity, the tyrant's mercy, but trust not the artful scoundrel armed with obsequience for your pride, praise for your vanity, generosity for your selfishness, words of religion for your conscience, spicy scandal for your curiosity. None that go with him return again. What chance has she who has listened to her own vanity, then to the flattery of others, and finally sold her jewel of great price? Conscience may ply her scorpion-whip, there may be repentance, bodily suffering, but the door of return is forever shut, and the inner voice cries out, "Thou are dishonoured, thou art stained, thou art lost." The lovelier the thing is, the more hopeless, the more lamentable its ruin. This sin ruins that which God planned to be so lovely—the sister, the ideal of purity to her brothers; the gentle, loving wife; the tender, devoted mother—yet the ruin of all this, all is forfeited for the short career of profligacy, short as the life of a moth!

—J. W. Sullivan.

If the slightest touch soils the pure and dazzling brightness of the lily; if the smallest stain mars its beauty, how detestable in the sight of God must be that foul sin which disfigures the soul and defiles in it the image of its Creator! When the disobedience of our first parents brought a pall of sin and death over the fair face of the newly created universe. He manifested His eternal mercy in the promise of a Redeemer. When Cain, the first murdered, purpled his hands in the blood of his innocent brother He threatened the severest doom on the hands that would slay him. The most wonderful favours of nature and of grace He lavished upon man. But no sooner did the vile sin of impurity enter the world and the children of man, forgetting the spirituality of their nature, gave themselves up to sensuality, than He repented of the work of His hands.

—J. A. M. Gillis.

DANCING AND THE CAPITAL SINS

Dancing may lead to all the deadly sins. To *pride,* by the desire of excelling in beauty, appearance, or elegance and skill. To *covetousness,* neglecting an aged and infirm parent, in order to spend all on perfumes and dress. To *lust,* by yielding to the impure thoughts and desires suggested in dancing. To *anger,* by the quarrels and enmities so often born there. To *gluttony,* in the banquets which accompany dancing. To *envy,* at seeing one's self surpassed in beauty, dress and attractions. To *sloth,* by the loathing and dislike of all forms of prayer and devotion.—*Cat. de Bourges.*

The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.—I *Cor.* VI, 13.

Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.—*Matt.* V, 28.

He gathereth to himself shame and dishonour, and his reproach shall not be blotted out.—*Prov.* VI, 33.

THE SOCIAL EVIL

Look around you, you need not look far to see the horrors of this social evil. Think of the many who come to be united in marriage and who should come as penitents. Think of the results that accrue from the very suggestiveness of our penny arcades, our theatrical posters, the flippant, fearless expose of the most delicate subjects by our theaters, our publications, our newspapers. Think of the open, shameless presence of fallen women in our streets, filled with a hellish readiness to entice others to follow them in the ways of sin. Consider that these human instruments are doing the work of demons, entrapping innocent girls, prowling about homes, shops and hospitals, offering pretended kindness and alluring to sham homes. Remember there are cities in this country of ours where the worst of traffics has become a vested interest. Think of her who teaches her unsuspecting sister the trick of infanticide. Think of your own sinful carelessness in not properly guarding your daughters against what not only might be but are occasions of sin in their own homes. Your young sons whose battles are, of all, the most difficult, are left unwarned and unprotected when the worst of temptations have commenced the struggle, when men, criminally even if heedlessly, are putting into their hands circulars or pamphlets they should never read. Reflect on some of these things for a moment; they will bring up many more terrible evils that will make you wonder that the waters of the sea do not rise again, or the flames that destroyed the cities of the plain do not flash.—*J. W. Sullivan.*

IMPURITY DESPISED EVEN BY SAVAGES

The Vice of Impurity is nearly always condemned by every nation, even by the most savage tribes. Historians say of the Parthians: "They punished no crime more severely than adultery." The Spartans chastised it so severely that there was hardly an adulterer found in their midst. Among the Arabs, both the guilty parties were beheaded. The Egyptians burned them alive. Even the Turks, who are known as a most sensual race, do not tolerate adultery. And St. Boniface tells us that it was a custom and law among the Saxons that if a girl dishonoured her family, the unhappy creature was obliged to take a rope and hang herself. Her infamous body was then cut down and burnt. The knave that had ruined the wretch was then dragged to the spot and hanged like a dog over the smoking ashes of her whom he had ruined. And yet all these nations knew nothing of the Christian revelation and of the Divine chastisements reserved in the life to come; it proves clearly that the light of reason sufficed them to see a special malice and deformity in adultery and fornication.—*L. William.*

IMMORALITY LEADS TO LOSS OF FAITH

F. Coppée, a member of the French Academy, led back by severe sickness to the faith of his youth, relates the following in his confessions: "I was raised a Christian, and fulfilled the religious duties with zeal even for some years after my first Holy Communion. What made me deviate from my pious habits were, I confess it openly, the aberrations of youthful age and the loathing to make certain

confessions. Quite many who are in the same position will admit, if they will be frank, that at the beginning they were estranged from their creed by the severe law which religion imposes on all in respect to sensuality, and only in later years they felt the want to extenuate and justify the transgressions of the moral law by a scientific system. Having taken the first step on the downward road, I could not fail to read books, listen to words, see examples which confirmed my notion that nothing can be more warranted but that man obey his pride and his sensuality; and soon I became totally indifferent in respect to religion. As will be seen, my case is an everyday case."

ADULTERY

As under the prohibition of theft every unlawful use of another's property is understood, so in the Sixth Commandment, by the word *adultery* is understood and prohibited everything that is contrary to purity and modesty; but while a theft may be only a venial sin, if the article stolen is only a trifle, every voluntary act of impurity, however slight, is a mortal sin.—*St. Augustine.*

SEDUCTION

O friendship, what an enemy! O seduction of the mind, and unaccountable greediness of doing mischief out of play and wantonness, and an appetite of another's loss, without any gain to myself, or desire of revenge; but only because it is said, "Let us go, let us do it," and one is ashamed not to be shameless.—*St. Augustine.*

CONCUPISCENCE

The evil lurks in ourselves. Let the eye that is sound, whole, healthy look upon every object fashioned by the hand of the Divine Maker. But wo to the rash one who presumes to do so with eyes diseased with concupiscence, with eyes not anointed with eye-salve! All things are clean to the clean. But our misfortune is that we are unclean from our origin, so that "the bewitchery of vanity obscureth good things and the wandering of concupiscence overturneth the innocent mind." What a blessed condition would be ours if we could follow the vision of our thoughts and, seeking God in all His works, find Him; and, referring all things to Him, make every object of pleasure a stepping-stone to approach nearer to Him! But such a lot has been denied us through the fault of Adam. The curse of original sin has for its effect to make us stop short of God in the things that strike our senses, to seek instead self and one's own selfish pleasures. And so it happens that the path which men follow in the desire of their eyes is the path of earthly satisfactions and sins. Lust prompts the wandering; sin is the result.

—*John H. Stapleton.*

THE SINNER AFRAID HIS PRAYER WOULD BE HEARD

St. Augustine in his Confessions offers himself as an example of this phenomenon, for he admits that he feared, when he prayed to be delivered from the evil of his ways, lest the Lord should hear him. He who does not wish to quit the path of iniquity takes no

chances and gives up his prayers, burns his bridges behind him, as it were. And when we grow finally weary of sinning, what do we do but fall back on prayer? For even as the just man, if he ceases to pray, becomes a sinner, even so, if the sinner prays, he becomes a just man.

CONQUERED BY PASSION

Disorderly affections, if they are not beaten down in the beginning, become our greatest tyrants. Many after having victoriously resisted the persecutions of the enemies of the faith, were afterwards lost because they did not resist the first assaults of some earthly passion.
—*St. Ambrose.*

PASSIONS LAWFUL IF REGULATED

Our passions are not of themselves bad or hurtful. When regulated according to the dictates of reason and prudence, they do us no injury but are, on the contrary, profitable to the soul, but when disorderly they are productive of irreparable mischief to those who obey them, for when any passion takes possession of the heart, it obscures the truth, and makes the soul incapable of distinguishing between good and evil.—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

EVEN SATAN ABHORS IMPURITY

Even the devils who held a high rank in Heaven before their fall disdain to tempt men to sins of the flesh. St. Thomas says that while Lucifer, who is supposed to have been the devil that tempted Jesus Christ in the desert, tempted Him to commit other sins, he scorned to tempt Him to offend against chastity.

GENERAL GRANT'S HATRED OF VULGARITY

Of the many stories told of General Grant (Non-Cath.) few are more to his credit than the following: When some man, with the license of camp life, in the midst of a group of officers told a vulgar story, and, glancing about him said, "There are no women present," the general replied: "No, but there are men present."

VULGAR JESTS

Many say, of course, "I mean no wrong; I only speak or sing in jest." St. Alphonsus replies to such an excuse: "Your jest will make the devil laugh and will make you weep throughout eternity."

VULGAR JESTS THE WIT OF FOOLS

Sir Horace Walpole (Non-Cath.), the great English statesman, was wont to encourage the coarsest anecdotes at his table, and, when some one remonstrated with him for this, he made the cynical reply. "Well, you see, a man in my position must keep all sorts of people in good humour, and this style of conversation gives every fool a chance of being witty."

MOTION PICTURES A HOTBED OF EVIL

The Italian Government has instituted a strict censorship of motion picture films. In publishing the decree that all films must be submitted for approval, the Government points out the great

danger which the vivid scenes of murder, adultery, robbery and other crimes must have upon the public, and especially upon the children.

ANGER

ANGER

He who is angry with his brother, although he should confine his anger within his own breast, is not free from sin; he who shall have given some indication of that anger sins grievously; but he who dreads not to treat his brother with harshness, and to utter reproach against him sins much more grievously. This, it is true, is to be understood of cases, in which no cause of being angry exists, for, to animadvert on those who are subject to our authority and power, if they commit a fault, is an occasion of anger which is permitted by God and His laws; but the anger of a Christian man ought to proceed, not from carnal feeling, but from the Holy Spirit, for it becomes us to be temples "of the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. vi, 19), in which "Jesus Christ may dwell" (Eph. ii, 17).

—Catechism of the Council of Trent.

LAWFUL ANGER

Anger is an affection or sentiment of our nature, and, like the sentiment of love, may be turned either to good or to bad ends, in proportion as we subject it to reason, or allow it to go beyond the bounds of reasonable activity. Thus, for instance, we should love our children, but we should not allow our love for them to blind us to their faults, or to relieve them from the punishment which is necessary to train our children aright. So we should be angry at injustice, we should be indignant at outrage, but we must not allow our anger to go to undue lengths. There is, then, an anger which is proper and reasonable, for it stimulates us to resist injustice, to perform our duty in correcting those who are placed under our jurisdiction, to arouse public sentiment against public dishonour, to defend our civic rights, to preserve our native land from the ravages of a foreign foe or a domestic enemy.

—Hugh T. Henry.

We find, upon reflection, that when we are angry we have a desire to punish in some way the one who has offended us, together with a strong impulse to carry out that punishment. When our position makes it a duty to punish, and there is just cause of offense and the offender is in some way subject to us or amenable to laws that we have a right to invoke, our anger may be right. I say *may* be right, because, although, absolutely speaking, it certainly would be right under the conditions I have mentioned, yet it is so very easy for us to deceive ourselves when our own interests are in question.—*H. G. Hughes.*

As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire, so an angry man stirreth up strife.—Prov. XXVI, 21.

Let all bitterness, and anger, and indignation, and clamour, and blasphemy be put away from you, with all malice.—Eph. IV, 31.

A passionate man provoketh quarrels: and he that is easily stirred up to wrath shall be more prone to sin.—Prov. XXIX, 22.

There is a lying rebuke in the anger of an injurious man: and there is a judgment that is not allowed to be good: and there is one that holdeth his peace, and he is wise.—Ecclus. XIX, 28.

Hast thou seen a man hasty to speak? folly is rather to be looked for than his amendment.—A passionate man provoketh quarrels.
—Prov. XXIX, 20, 22.

UNLAWFUL ANGER

The abuse of the possibly lawful emotion of anger comes about in three ways. Either, having just cause for offense, we allow our anger to become immoderate, greater than the cause justifies, permitting it to gain possession of us with little or no attempt to restrain it on our part, putting ourselves, as we say, "into a passion"; or we may be unjustly angry, angry without a cause; or, lastly, we may be carried away by a vindictive spirit that leads us to desire the infliction of a punishment upon the offender greater than he deserves, or, even if he deserves it, we may wish to see him punished not because his action has been evil, but to gratify simply our personal and private vengeance.—*H. G. Hughes.*

WRATH AND SCORN

The anger which our dear Lord condemns is that causeless, silent wrath, and its development into words of scorn. How much suffering has it not bred! Think of the families made miserable by that wretched creature who is an angel abroad and a devil at home! Think of the anguish of mind and torture of soul of him who smothers his anger, hides it as a snake in his bosom, warms and cherishes it there, content to be himself undone so he may contrive to sting his enemy! How the daily stings and goads, which, from small beginnings, lead to more hideous disorders, and, from a hasty word or look, lay the dark foundation of a mischief which destroys, ere long, the comfort of neighbourhoods, the peace of families and the eternal happiness of souls! The cruel words of those who are angry with their brothers, how often have they ruined a business, destroyed family happiness, terminated Christian usefulness. Men doing noble work, how have they been checked, and even ruined, by those whose tongues have been set on fire of hell! The father in the home, the master in the shop, the head of the school, let loose the vials of their wrath, and inferiors, down to the bottom of the scale, have not only to bear the brunt of the storm, but to sink their own judgment and spend their lives in ministering to what they know to be caprice.
—J. W. Sullivan.

To be angry is human, to overcome anger is the question.
—St. Jerome.

CONQUERING ANGER

We read in the "Lives of the Fathers of the Desert" that a certain good religious, finding in the monastery where he dwelt many things which always made him angry, one day said to himself: "I see it is necessary for me to take up my abode in the desert, for there will be no one to contradict me or annoy me, and I shall no longer be tempted to yield to this terrible sin of anger." Saying this, he retired to the desert, and built for himself a little cell, where he spent many happy days by himself, without any one going near him to tempt him to impatience. But one day, going to the stream to draw water, the pitcher which he placed on the side of the stream, after filling it, was overturned three times successively. Immediately his old temptation assailed him again, and flying into a passion, he lifted up the vessel and dashed it to pieces. When calm had again been restored, he said to himself: "The devil has deceived me in making me think that I could overcome this vice of anger by fleeing the society of men. No; the real remedy is to fight it till I have overcome it. Wherever I may go, I must meet with something which will be a temptation to me; so instead of fleeing from it like a coward, I must go forward resolutely and face the enemy, and, with the assistance of God, overcome it."

A CURE FOR THE HABIT OF CURSING

An old general, suffering from rheumatism and gout, was placed in a hospital. Whenever his pains were great he would curse horribly. The sister said it was a sin. He replied: "I cannot help it." "Yes, you can; I know a remedy." "Tell it to me, and I'll use it." "Every time you curse, give me a dollar for the poor." Hearing this, the general thought: "If I do this, I'll soon be as poor as a church mouse; but I must keep my word." "I'll do it, sister," he said. A few moments later his pains increased, and he cursed. The sister held out her hand, and he gave her a dollar; but he began to be on his guard, and for some hours he kept from cursing. In the evening his pains were so great that he cursed again, and the sister got another dollar. The following days, though he suffered much, he was so careful that he cursed but a few times, and soon overcame the habit altogether.

—Ferreol Girardey, C.SS.R.

CURSING CREATES DISTRUST

One evening, a little boy came into the sitting-room of a hotel to sell his papers. A man was sitting by. He seemed to be attracted by the intelligent looks of the boy, and said to him, with an oath: "Come here, my lad; you are a fine boy. Let me have a paper." The boy gave him the paper, and received an extra penny, the man swearing again that he was a fine boy. "What is your father's name?" he asked. "My father is dead," said the boy. "I say, my little fellow," said the man, who kept swearing at almost every word he spoke, "how would you like to come and live with me, and be a great man some day?" "I think," said the boy quietly, "that I should not like to live with a man who swears as you do." The man was silent. What could he say? And the little boy went on to sell his papers.

BLASPHEMY

They involve themselves in far more detestable guilt, who, with impure and contaminated mouth dare to blaspheme and execrate the most holy Name of God, which is to be blessed and praised above measure by all creatures, as also the name of the Saints reigning with God; a crime so atrocious, so monstrous, that sometimes the Sacred Scriptures, should they happen to speak of blasphemy, use the word "blessing" (3 Kings, xxi, 13; Job. i, 2; ii, 9).

—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

UNTRUTHFULNESS

LYING

Lying is a sin against society and an offense against God. It attacks the very foundations of society. Men can live together and make progress only so long as they can trust one another. Civilization is based on mutual dependence, and mutual dependence without mutual confidence is unthinkable. The more flagrant violaters of this trust—the criminal class—society puts behind prison bars. Nor does society fail to punish the liar. He who is forever making lying excuses, who is ever ready with a denial or a plausible explanation when detected in or accused of wrong-doing, soon finds himself charged with things of which he is innocent, and his denials and excuses rejected. He has destroyed the confidence which his fellows should be able to place in his word. The "romancer" and the chronic exaggerater soon find even their lightest word, their most moderate statement disregarded and themselves treated with contempt more or less lightly veiled. He who pretends to virtue or to cleverness which he does not possess, receives no credit for those qualities to which he may justly lay claim, while he is cut off from improvement by his pretense to perfection.—*Francis Harvey.*

You shall not lie, neither shall any man deceive his neighbour.
—*Lev.* XIX, 11.

He that speaketh lies shall perish.—Prov. XIX, 9.

Their throat is an open sepulchre: with their tongues they acted deceitfully; the poison of asps is under their lips.—Ps. XIII, 3.

The deceitful man shall not find gain: but the substance of a just man shall be precious gold.—Prov. XII, 27.

A thief is better than a man that is always lying: but both of them shall inherit destruction.—Ecclus. XX, 27.

Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord: but they that deal faithfully please Him.—Prov. XII, 22.

One day a friend of St. Thomas of Aquin cried out to him by way of amusement: "Thomas, look at the flying ox." St. Thomas looked around him in astonishment to see where that strange animal

was, but, of course, could not see it anywhere. His friend then began to laugh, and said to him that he was surprised to see that he was so credulous. But the Saint replied: "It is much easier to believe that an ox could fly than that a Christian could tell a lie."

LYING, THE CHILD'S FIRST SIN

It is often remarked that children always speak the truth, yea, are symbols of candour and simplicity. Strange to say, a lie is their first sin. Scarcely are they able to speak when they utter lies to hide their little faults or avoid punishment. Do you know, parents, that it is you who are the cause of the many lies of your sons and daughters? That it is you who make them false and deceitful? Why use such severity if a child happens to break anything in the home? Is it to be wondered at that the children will have recourse to lies in order to avoid the correction in store for them? When will you realize that this is a very faulty training? Declare unto them that, if they have done anything wrong, you will readily forgive them, provided they acknowledge the truth, but that you will be obliged to chastize them rigorously if they utter one single untruth. In this way you will prevent them from becoming deceitful hypocrites, and will sanctify them in truth.—*L. William.*

LAWFUL EQUIVOCATION

When St. Athanasius was compelled to flee from the persecutors, he came upon some of those who sought him. They did not recognize him in his disguise and asked him whether Athanasius was far from there? "No," he said, "he is not far from here." In this way Athanasius did not lie, for he was indeed not far from them, although he deceived them by concealing his identity.—*P. Hehel, S. J.*

LAWFUL SIMULATION

There are certain circumstances in which pretense is not done maliciously and in which it is perfectly blameless. There is a pretense in things indifferent in themselves and done with a good purpose. Here there is no question of taking to one's self glory to which one has no right, or of attributing to others glory to which they have no right. When Cleophas asked Our Lord, "Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and has not known the things that have been done there in these days?" He answered, as if He did not know, "What things?" On another occasion, as He drew near to the town of Emmaus with His disciples, He acted as if He did not know that He was going to stay there. "He made as if He would go further." These are instances of good and legitimate pretense. They are actions indifferent in themselves but done with a good motive. They ought not to be called by the name of "pretense" but by the name of "simulation." Just as there is the peculiar use of words known as "lawful equivocation" so there is the peculiar use of deeds known as "lawful simulation."—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL PRETENSE

However difficult it may be to give an exact intellectual representation of these two kinds of acts; and however awkward it may be

to make our definitions fit in with all concrete circumstances, there is no one who does not recognize at once the difference between the pretense which is lawful simulation and the pretense which is sinful hypocrisy and flattery. It all depends on the motive with which the act is done. If the pretense is in order to gain a better reputation than that to which one has a right, then it is bad. If the pretense is in order to follow out some lawful end, then it is good.

The story of St. Athanasius at the Council of Tyre well illustrates our meaning. The Arian party had brought an accusation against him of having insulted a young girl. Athanasius appeared before the Council and with him a priest called Timothy. Timothy pretended he was Athanasius and thus spoke to the accuser: "You say that I have been with you?" "Yes," she replied on oath, "you have sinned with me." In this way, by the simulation of Timothy, the fair name of Athanasius was saved. When Timothy for the time being assumed the rôle of Athanasius, it was not with a view of persuading everybody that he had the virtues of Athanasius, but simply and solely with a view to preserving Athanasius' good name. It is the motive which gives the character to the act in matters of pretense. The conduct of Timothy was that of lawful simulation.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

A LIE TOLD IN JEST

A man of a fun-loving disposition was once writing a letter at his desk, when his little daughter stole up beside him. The child, seeing ten bright gold coins lying near her father's hand, asked where they came from. With a twinkle in his eye he replied: "Little one, don't you know those bright dollars grow on a bush called the gold bush? They are planted in the ground like beans, and the plant grows with dollars hanging on the branches." It was only a simple joke, that any older mind would not credit, but the child believed implicitly every word falling from the lips of her father. So while he continued writing, she quietly took the money, ran out into the garden, and buried it in the ground. Then she joyously returned to his side, saying: "You'll have a fine lot of dollars now, father. I planted every one." In consternation the man sprang from his desk. "Come with me immediately, child," he said, "and show me where you put them." Vainly did the little one point out the spot; the gold was not to be found. Either she had forgotten the place, or else, someone, seeing her action, had removed it during her absence. This shows us what an unlooked-for consequence sometimes results from a lie told in jest.
—*Frederick Reuter.*

HYPOCRISY

HYPOCRISY

The sin of hypocrisy is by no means the worst of sins. Yet such is its character that it is about the worst sin a man would care to have attributed to him. There is an especial lowness about it which places it lower in public estimation than many sins which are in themselves more grievous. To have won the reputation of being a hypocrite is to have gone down to the lowest depths of social degradation,

Hypocrisy is a species of lying. Still, I think, a man would rather be called a liar than a hypocrite. Our Lord held up the mirror to this vice in His scathing rebuke of the Scribes and the Pharisees. He whose pure soul reflected eternal truth, He whose keen gaze pierced all things through and through, had a special horror of finding pretense in a human soul.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

Be not a hypocrite in the sight of men, and let not thy lips be a stumbling-block to thee.—Ecclus. I, 37.

No hypocrite shall come before His Presence.—Job XIII, 16.

What is the hope of the hypocrite if through covetousness he take by violence, and God deliver not his soul?—Will God hear his cry when distress shall come upon him?—Job XXVII, 8-9.

Wo to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut the Kingdom of Heaven against men: for you yourselves do not enter in, and those that are going in you suffer not to enter.—Wo to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you devour the houses of widows, praying long prayers. For this you shall receive the greater judgment.—Matt. XXIII, 13, 14.

RELIGIOUS DISHONESTY

Religious dishonesty is better known by the name of false piety. It also bears, as a sad monument and a standing reproach of its typical representatives, the name of pharisaism. Mankind has shown its condemnation for the Pharisees by labeling with their name one of the ugliest and most despised vices. Religious dishonesty degrades piety into a mere outward exercise and makes it the tool of self-interest. It is particularly loathsome in the eyes of God, to whom lying lips are an abomination and who is jealous of His glory.

—*Charles P. Bruehl.*

RELIGIOUS PRETENSE

We should be wrong, perhaps, in calling the sin of religious pretense the very worst of sins; but it certainly may be described as the most odious, and as one which even the irreligious regard with a large amount of contempt. But the pity of it is that, in yet another manner, under circumstances differing from those already mentioned, it has wrought untold harm, filling the world with bitterness and strife. Not one of those unhappy persons who have separated themselves from the Church of Christ and finished by setting up some new kind of religion, has been at all backward in the profuse use of pious language. The "Lord, Lord," has been a very favorite phrase with them. They have, all of them, had a large supply of prayers upon their lips. Their talk, their expressions, made them seem like saints. Arius, the first notable person to deny the Divinity of Our Lord, was regarded by his followers as an eminently God-fearing man. Nestorius, who refused to acknowledge that Our Lady was the Mother of God, was looked upon as a most saintly person. Martin Luther is even at the present day esteemed by thousands as having been extremely holy. Nevertheless, the two

former were remarkable for their haughtiness and their cruelty, and the last was so filled with imperfections of a serious nature that the impartial historian finds the search after his virtues to be a somewhat fruitless task.—*John Freeland.*

Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.—A good man, out of a good treasure, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of an evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.
—*Matt.* XII, 34-35.

Many have fallen by the edge of the sword: but not so many as have perished by their own tongue.—Ecclus. XXVIII, 22.

In the multitude of words there shall not want sin: but he that refraineth his lips is most wise.—Prov. X, 19.

Behold, how small a fire what a great wood it kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.—The tongue is placed among our members, which defileth the whole body, and inflameth the wheel of our nativity, being set on fire by hell.—James III, 5-6.

A deceitful tongue loveth not truth, and a slippery mouth worketh ruin.—Prov. XXVI, 28.

They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; the venom of asps is under their lips.—Ps. CXXXIX, 4.

Their tongue is a piercing arrow, it hath spoken deceit: with his mouth one speaketh peace with his friend, and secretly he lieth in wait for him.—Jer. IX, 8.

A time to keep silence, and a time to speak.—Eccl. III, 7.

SLANDER; DETRACTION

DETRACTION

By this commandment is forbidden not only false testimony, but also the detestable propensity and habit of detraction, from which pest it is incredible how many and what serious inconveniences and evils spring. This vice of speaking ill and contumeliously of others in private, the Sacred Scriptures everywhere reprobate; "with him," says David, " I would not eat" (Ps. c, 5); and St. James: "Detract not one another, brethren" (James iv, 11). Nor do the Sacred Scriptures supply precepts only on the subject, but also examples, by which is made known the magnitude of this vice; for Aman, by forged charges, so incensed Assuerus against the Jews, that he ordered all the people of that nation to be destroyed (Esther, xiii). Sacred history abounds with similar examples, by the relation of which priests will endeavour to deter the faithful from such wickedness.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent.*

DETRACTORS

That the force of this sin of detraction may be fully understood, we must know that the reputation of men is injured not only by calumniating their character, but likewise by exaggerating and amplifying their faults; and should anything have been committed by any one in secret, which, when made known, must be seriously injurious to his character, he who, at a time, in a place, before persons, when, where, before whom, it was unnecessary, has given publicity to the matter, is justly called a detractor and a slanderer. But of all slanders there is none more criminal than that of those who slander the Catholic doctrine and its teachers; in the same class are those who exalt with praises the teachers of false and erroneous doctrines.—*Catechism of the Council of Trent*

The detractor is the abomination of men.—Prov. XXIV, 9.

The whisperer and the double-tongued is accursed: for he hath troubled many that were at peace.—Ecclus. XXVIII, 15.

Be not called a whisperer, and be not taken in thy tongue, and confounded.—For confusion and repentance is upon a thief, and an evil mark of disgrace upon the double-tongued: but to the whisperer, hatred, and enmity, and reproach.—Ecclus. V, 16-17.

Blessed is he that is defended from a wicked tongue, that hath not passed into the wrath thereof, and that hath not drawn the yoke thereof, and hath not been bound in its bands.—For its yoke is a yoke of iron: and its bands are bands of brass.—The death thereof is a most evil death: and hell is preferable to it.—Ecclus. XXVIII, 23-25.

If a serpent bite in silence, he is nothing better that backbiteth secretly.—Eccl. X, 11.

Being idle they learn to go about from house to house, and are not only idle but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.—I Tim. V, 13.

THE COMMON EXCUSE OF DETRACTORS

The one who is guilty of detraction usually defends himself by asserting that he is speaking the truth. This is far from being an extenuating circumstance. The injury done is often all the greater because of the whole or partial truth of the statement. When a man is forced to admit that the charge is substantially true, what hope has he of establishing his injured reputation? He who has suffered from slander can at least gain the championship and the sympathy of some few who have heard the charge, but the victim of detraction is forced to hang his head in shame, or to bear with what silent fortitude he can the cold looks and harsh criticisms that are meted out to him.—*Francis Harvey.*

They who appeared against Our Lord at His trial are known as the false witnesses, yet their testimony was in part true. They

said, "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands." What He really said was, "If you destroy this temple (the temple of His body) in three days I will raise it up." Strange that the professed enemies of Christ should find so many disciples among those who claim to be followers of the Incarnate Charity.

—*Francis Harvey.*

By revealing the defects of another we make our own vice known.—*St. Ignatius.*

THE TALE-BEARER

The tale-bearer listens with devilish glee, and then is off to relate what he has heard where it will do the most harm. This mischief-maker does not announce to a gaping public, like the other, all that he has ferreted out, but with a fine discrimination picks the party that should not properly be informed and desires it least. He cheerfully carries his Pandora's box of trouble to a spot where peace and harmony have hitherto reigned, opens it, leaves it, and then goes away with satisfaction in his heart. On his way, with a word here and a word there, he will help along the work of havoc and destruction wherever he espies a favourable opening; and departing, leaves behind him a trail of misery and strife. Thus are friendships severed, distrust engendered, suspicions aroused, etc. After-explanations avail little, once the seed of evil has been planted in the breast of the aggrieved one. By a word the harm is done; many words have not the power to undo it.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

DETRACTION CANNOT BE REPAIRED

A pious and noble lady, penitent of St. Philip Neri, related the following about herself. She one day confessed to the Saint that she had spoken to two or three persons of some light hidden fault of a friend of hers. St. Philip ordered her, as a penance, to buy a chicken at the market and bring it to him, passing through several frequented streets and plucking a feather from the chicken at every step. She did so, and when she had handed him the featherless chicken, he told her: "Now go back the same way, pick up all the feathers you dropped and bring them to me." "But, father, I cannot, for they have been scattered all over the city." "And also your detraction has gone all over the city and you cannot repair it."

—*Ferreol Girardey, C. SS. R.*

LISTENING TO DETRACTORS

St. Jerome and St. Bernard write: "Whether the detractor or the listener is the more criminal it is not easy to decide;" for if there were no listeners, there would be no detractors. To the same class belong those, who by their artifices cause divisions and dissensions among men, and who feel a particular pleasure in sowing discord; thus severing, by fiction and falsehood, the closest friendships and social ties, and driving to endless hatred and to arms the fondest friends. Of such pestilent characters the Lord expresses His detestation in these words: "Thou shalt not be a detractor, nor a whisperer among the people" (Lev. xix, 16). Of this description were the

advisors of Saul, who strove to alienate his affection from, and to exasperate him against, King David (1 Kings, xxiv, 40, xxvi, 19).

—Catechism of the Council of Trent.

AVOIDING DETRACTION

When we are under the necessity of exposing a person's faults we should also speak of his virtues and good qualities, in order not to weaken the esteem of others for him.—*St. Vincent de Paul.*

SLANDER

Who steals my purse, steals trash;
But he who filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that, which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.

—Shakespere.

He hath opened a pit and dug it, and he is fallen into the hole he made.—Ps. VII, 16.

Hast thou heard a word against thy neighbour? let it die within thee.—Ecclus. XIX, 10.

THE SLANDERER WORSE THAN THE CALUMNIATOR

If I were asked which of the two exercises the most destructive influence on society, the calumniator or the slanderer, the man who out of sheer malice invents gross falsehoods about his neighbour's character or the man who, from vanity, or a petty garrulous spirit, is forever detracting the little faults of acquaintances, I should answer without hesitation that it was the slanderer, because gross calumnies are generally easily detected, but it is petty slander that lives and works its poisonous way in the minds and hearts of individuals.

—P. A. Sheehan.

A PECULIARITY OF SLANDER

A peculiarity of the slanderous story is that no one owns it. It is like the little stone spoken of in the Scriptures, "cut without hands out of the mountain," which smote the goodly statue of gold and iron and clay and laid it low. Slander, like the "little stone," came into being "without hands," but every hand is outstretched to give it momentum in its onward course, while each disowns the destruction wrought when the fair character lies in ruins.

In England there used to be a game played called "scandal." The company sat in a circle. One whispered some story—generally a bit of gossip—to his neighbour, who in turn repeated it to the one next to him, and so on to the end. The amusement—and, as a rule, the astonishment—came when the story told by the first was compared with that received by the last. Truly an instructive game.

—Francis Harvey.

THE BACKBITER

The backbiter is of a keenly observant, even prying, disposition. He has a fine, well developed scent for unsavoury gossip, a good memory for evil, and a natural itching for retailing all he sees and hears that reflects on others and will provoke his hearers to merriment and laughter. His mind is well stored; he learns a

great deal and forgets nothing; and no tale loses with him in the elling. He watches especially those whom he dislikes or against vhom he bears ill-feeling or hatred. Any fault or blunder that he liscovers, he blazons forth with delight. He is known far and vide. He is feared and detested, even while he seems to entertain, for "the venom of asps is under his lips." His unfailing topic of conversation being other people's foibles and mistakes, he becomes o the community in which he resides a walking bill-board of gossip and scandal.—*Thomas J. Gerrard.*

SILENCING CALUMNY

While several gentlemen were one day dining with a bishop, one of the guests opened a slanderous conversation about an absent person. In order to silence the calumniator, the prelate, calling one of his servants, ordered him to go and bring the gentleman whose character had been attacked. Immediately the slanderer begged his host to revoke the order, and not another word of detraction escaped his lips.—*Frederick Reuter.*

THE RESULT OF CALUMNY

In the days when the first Christian missionaries went to Japan o preach the Gospel to the natives, certain merchants from Holland went to the emperor and told him that the only aim these mission-aries had was to bring the Portuguese and the Spaniards into the country, that in time they might take possession of it and add it to their dominions. This great calumny was the source of the ruin of religion in that empire, and the cause of a great persecution which was raised against the Christians who dwelt in it.

At that time there were 400,000 Christians in Japan; forty years afterwards there was not even one to be found in the whole empire. This was the result of a lie which was raised by the cupidity of these merchants, who wished to be the only ones who would have a right to come into that country.

CALUMNY OR TRUTH?

Evil or ill-informed men calumniate you; pray God never to let any harm be said of you which is *not* calumny.—*St. Ignatius.*

RASH JUDGMENT

JUDGE NOT!

To have no opinion of ourselves, and to think always well and commendably of others, is great wisdom and high perfection.

—*Thomas à Kempis.*

RASH JUDGMENT

It is said that Coleridge gave to Allston regarding art the advice: "Never judge a picture by its defects"; and the advice is good to apply to men. Too often our judgments are not only uncharitable but based on insufficient evidence.

"A painting," says another, "has a right to be judged in the best light." Shall we not give to man then as much, in the way of fair-ness and charity?

"I hate the man!" exclaimed Charles Lamb one day when a gentleman's name was mentioned. "Why, you do not even know him," was the reply of his friends. "That is the reason why I hate him," replied the genial wit.

Before judging let us be sure that we have all the facts of the case, nor trust to appearances or the mere word of others. Let us dread to impute improper motives, but rather be inclined to excuse an act, if evil, on the ground of ignorance or misconception, or good though mistaken, motives. When there is no defense possible, why not attribute the fault to human infirmity and frailty, for which we can well afford to make some allowance. The advice of St. Bernard is good: "If you can not excuse the deed, excuse the intention. Attribute the fault to ignorance, to surprise, to frailty. If the act be of so vile a nature that it can not be justified by any plea of that sort attribute it to a violent temptation, and say to yourself: 'If I had been so violently tempted, what now would I be!'"—*Thomas J. Gerrard*

"How were the streets of Jerusalem kept clean?" asked a Scotch peasant of a Presbyterian elder, who was bearing somewhat too hard upon his delinquencies without being quite a saint himself. "I never heard," replied the elder. "Well, I'll tell you; every man swept before his own door."

THE BAG OF SAND

St. Prior, a hermit of Nitria, was very harsh and severe towards himself, but indulgent and charitable to others. One day, when he was present at an assembly of solitaries in the desert, they began to confer on divers subjects of piety. After a little while, some of the monks came to speak of a grave fault committed by a brother who was not there. St. Prior at first kept silent, but afterwards, perceiving that they still continued to wound charity, he quitted the assembly, took a sack, filled it with sand and laid it on his shoulders. He also took a small basket, put a little sand in the bottom and took it in his hand. It was in this singular state that he again made his appearance among his solitaries. You may imagine how eagerly every one asked him what he meant by that. "Alas!" he answered with a sigh, "this sack of sand represents my numberless sins and transgressions, but I take care to carry them behind my back, so as not to see them; this basket, on the contrary, which contains only a little sand, represents the faults of others, which I have before my eyes to judge and condemn them. Would it not be better for me to carry my sins before me to bewail them, and pray to God to forgive them than to meddle with those of others?" This discourse, so ingenious and so true, touched the solitaries; they not only ceased to speak of the faults of others, but agreed that it was only by acting so that salvation could be attained.—*Lives of the Fathers.*

JUDGE NOT BY APPEARANCES

An Apostle and a robber died about the same hour when the

Redeemer was crucified for their salvation; the thief enter into Paradise, the Apostle was lost eternally.—*Bishop Bellord.*

Judge not according to the appearance, but judge just judgment.
—*John* VII, 24.

SCANDAL

SCANDAL

Consider how the angel-guardians of those little ones weep at seeing them in the state of sin, and how they call for vengeance from God against the sacrilegious tongues that have scandalized them.
—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

It is enough to say, that they who give scandal rob God of a child, and murder a soul, for whose salvation he has spent His Blood and His Life.—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

SCANDAL GIVERS

In speaking of other sinners, the Scriptures hold out hopes of amendment and pardon; but they speak of those who give scandal as persons separated from God, for whose salvation there is very little hope.

SCANDAL, EASY TO FIND

Even though you would live among angels, but unduly scrutinize their acts you would find fault with many things, and take scandal, because you would not understand the inner motive of their actions.
—*Albertus Magnus.*

SCANDALS IN THE CHURCH

It is not to be expected that the Church should be free from all scandals. She has to do a difficult work with unpromising material. She has to deal, not with the perfect, but with very imperfect men, weak, beset with temptations, struggling painfully from the lower to the higher life. In that path there are many bitter experiences, many relapses, many total failures. Time brings no change: the Church's work must always be imperfect, for it will not be finished till the Son of Man comes in judgment. Her life will always be a struggle against wickedness both inside as well as outside her fold, scandals will always dog her footsteps while she fulfils her mission of holiness, as the shadow follows him who walks in the sunlight.—*Bishop Bellord.*

He that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a mill-stone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea.—Wo to the world because of scandals! For it must needs be that scandals come: but nevertheless wo to that man by whom the scandal cometh!
—*Matt.* XVIII, 6-7.

UNLAWFUL GAIN

THEFT

Of open, direct theft much need not be said. Its heinousness is fairly well recognized. What needs to be thoroughly insisted upon, is that sinful extravagance and gambling are of a piece with theft, as surely as impure words and impure thoughts are of a piece with the most flagrant violations of the Sixth Commandment.

But theft is not always open and direct. How often in the day is God's commandment broken by the dishonest tradesman who gives short weight, or who charges exorbitant prices? How many children pilfer from their parents, and how many parents make light of such pilfering, forgetful that the child is a criminal in the sight of God! "He that stealeth anything from his father, or from his mother, and saith, This is no sin, is the partner of a murderer." How often do we see workmen shirking their work, or doing it with wilful negligence? They sell eight hours of labour and give five or six. What are such men but thieves, who are bound before the tribunal of God's justice. This is a condition of affairs that is becoming appallingly common. It seems that the better are the terms obtained by labour the more prevalent grows this theft of time and service. Men selfishly disregard the interests of the employer to whose service they have bound themselves: but call to mind the saying of St. Luke: "He that is unjust in that which is little is unjust also in that which is greater. If you have not been faithful in that which is another's who will give you that which is your own?"

On the other hand, we have those who defraud the workmen of their rightful wages, taking advantage of their necessity or ignorance to cheat them into an agreement to work for less than their labour is worth; who make an unnecessary delay in paying their wages or defraud them entirely. These are "sins that cry to heaven for vengeance."—*Francis Harvey.*

Be not anxious for goods unjustly gotten: for they shall not profit thee in the day of calamity and revenge.—For confusion and repentance is upon a thief.—Ecclus. V, 10, 17.

The robberies of the wicked shall be their downfall, because they would not do judgment.—Prov. XXI, 7,

Some distribute their own goods, and grow richer: others take away what is not their own, and are always in want.—Prov. XI, 24.

STEALING

There are more ways than one of stealing the property of others, and it is not always the man who breaks into your house that is the biggest thief. You know, only too well, how our modern society is overrun with defrauders of every kind; the millionaire who has become rich by fraudulent speculation; the company promoter who lures the unwary to entrust to him their hard-earned competence with which they had hoped to make secure a happy evening to their lives of toil; the commercial men who make huge profits by the sales

of adulterated commodities, ruining not only the pockets but the health of those who buy of them; the employers of labourers who take advantage of the wide-spread poverty and the pressing necessities of the poor to extort from them hard labour—labour that costs not only the sweat of their brows but their very life blood—at far less than that living wage that is the just right of everyone who is willing to work for it—all these, dear brethren, are in reality thieves; yes, and more than thieves—oppressors, tyrants, and even murderers.

So, too, many who cheat upon a smaller scale are not free from the same reproach. The store-keeper who sells under weight; the employee who scamps his work, every man who deludes people by means of false advertisements in which lying statements are made as to the quality of the goods or the services which he offers to the public—all these are thieves; for he who obtains money or any other valuables by cheating, is a thief, and guilty of sin, more or less grave, according to the amount of which another is deprived against the virtue of justice.—*H. G. Hughes.*

DISHONEST OR IMPRUDENT MAKING OF DEBTS

The contracting of debts with the intention of not paying them, or with culpable rashness and imprudence, is a sin for which men will have to answer at the judgment seat of Jesus Christ. How much suffering and misery are not these men responsible for; suffering to those to whom they owe money; suffering to their own families, disgrace and even destitution to those dependent upon them, when at last the evil day comes and their long-suffering creditors will wait no longer! Let Christian parents, and all who have charge of the young, point out to them how entirely contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ is such a practice; and warn them against the inducements that traders will often hold out to persuade them to purchase things that are both needless to them and beyond their means.

—*H. G. Hughes.*

THE DEATH OF A USURER

There was once a usurer at the point of death. He saw that his days were numbered, and having professed the Catholic Faith, he was anxious to die a good death. A priest was sent for, who, discovering that the riches he had amassed had been obtained by unjust means, urged him to make restitution before he died, as the only way of securing his salvation. "But what will become of my children if I do this?" said the dying man. "The salvation of your soul is of infinitely more importance to you than the temporal well-being of your family," answered the priest.

After a few moments of silent reflection he roused himself, and said to the priest: "I cannot do what you ask, and I will take the consequences upon myself."

He turned his face towards the wall, and in a few minutes he was dead.

THE DEATH OF A MISER

A certain man who was very rich, but who had obtained his riches by unlawful means, and who had lived for this world alone, lay at the point of death. Seeing that his end was near, he sent for his

lawyer and witnesses, that he might make his last will and testament before he died. When they came, he began to dictate to them his will in these words: "I leave my body to the earth, from which it came, and I leave my soul to Satan, to whom it belongs." When those who were present heard these words, they thought that he had lost his senses. He knew their thoughts, and said: "No, I have not lost my senses; I know what I am saying; and now, again, I repeat the same words: I leave my body to the earth and my soul to Satan."

On hearing these terrible words repeated, they besought him to think of what he was saying, and to try to have more Christian sentiments at the moment when he was on the point of appearing before God to be judged. But the unfortunate man repeated, for the third time, the same words, adding: "I do this because during my lifetime I have served the world instead of God. More still, I leave to Satan the souls of my wife and my children, because for them I heaped up my ill-gotten wealth, that they might have fine clothes, and the means of living an idle and worldly life." Very soon after pronouncing these awful words he expired in despair, leaving a terrible example to those who, for the sake of worldly things, sacrifice their eternal salvation.

ENVY

ENVY

Envy cast angels into hell, and expelled man from Paradise. Envy moistened the earth the first time with blood. Envy induced the sons of Jacob to sell their brother. Envy demanded the Blood of Christ and accomplished its purpose.—*St. Peter Chrysologus.*

ENVY, JEALOUSY

Envy, or jealousy, is the daughter of pride. It consists in sadness at another's prosperity because we conceive ourselves to be belittled thereby. It means that we think so much of ourselves as to consider that *we,* and not another, ought to be favoured with this or that thing possessed by the one whom we envy.—*H. G. Hughes.*

AVARICE, ENVY, AMBITION

Passionate, uncontrolled *avarice* in the heart of an Apostle betrayed Christ. Passionate, uncontrolled *envy* in the hearts of the high priests persecuted Christ, and passionate, uncontrolled *ambition* and fear in the heart of the governor pronounced the sentence of death.

—*C. M. Thuente, O. P.*

A man that maketh haste to be rich, and envieth others, is ignorant that poverty shall come upon him.—Prov. XXVIII, 22.

The eye of the covetous man is insatiable in his portion of iniquity: he will not be satisfied till he consume his own soul, drying it up.

—*Ecclus.* XIV, 9.

The eye of the envious is wicked; and he turneth away his face, and despiseth his own soul.—Ecclus. XIV, 8.

Even if another is loved and you are not, by one very dear to ourself—a case in which not to envy is indeed most difficult—emember that the love of Jesus Christ is the best love of all—iternal, unchangeable, undying; deeper than any human love; and rive out envy from your soul. We can not compel human love. The ove of the Heart of Jesus needs no compulsion. It is the fashion mong non-Catholics to sneer at those who have entered the religious ife on account of some wounding of their human ambitions or ffections. But they were truly wise; they were truly undeceived. Iaving learned, by a sharp and bitter lesson, the vanity of even the est of this world's gifts, they sought their satisfaction where alone rue joys are to be found.—*H. G. Hughes.*

PRIDE

RIDE

Pride is the inordinate estimation of one's self, and the inordinate elight in one's own gifts of nature or of grace. *Inordinate,* I say, iat is, such a self-estimation and self-love as are unreasonable—ut of accord with the truth and fact that all we have is not from urselves, but from God who gave it, and who is the Author of all iat is good and admirable in all things created. To delight reason-bly in the gifts of God that we possess; to have a due respect for ur own dignity as children of God by creation and by grace, humbly cknowledging that all is from Him—that is not pride.

—*H. G. Hughes.*

Whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be humbled: and he that shall umble himself, shall be exalted.—Matt. XXIII, 12.

God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble.
—*James* IV, 6.

Every proud man is an abomination to the Lord: though hand hould be joined to hand, he is not innocent.—Prov. XVI, 5.

Pride is hateful before God and man: and all iniquity of nations is xecrable.—Ecclus. X, 7.

Nor from the beginning have the proud been acceptable to Thee: ut the prayer of the humble and the meek hath always pleased hee.—Judith IX, 16.

He that despiseth his neighbour, sinneth.—Prov. XIV, 21.

He that despiseth his friend, is mean of heart.—Prov. XI, 12.

Pride is of all vices that which is at the root of all sin; Humility, f all virtues, is the seed-virtue of all soul-progress. Pride is at the ottom of all rebellion, Humility is the source of all submission. ride was the crime which caused the fall of Lucifer; Humility, the

crowning disposition which saved Michael and his followers, and has produced ever since all those whose lives have been worthy of imitation.—*P. Halpin.*

OVERCOMING PRIDE

One day the servant came to St. Vincent. "Please, reverend father," he said, "there is a poor, ragged man from the country at the door who wants to see you; he says he is your nephew." St. Vincent felt these words most keenly. That a poor man should come and claim kindred with him, who was so well known throughout the whole city, and even at the court of the king himself, was disagreeable to human nature. So he said to the servant: "Go down and speak to him, and give him whatever he needs." But immediately detecting the motive which made him say these words, and that it arose from pride, he overcame himself on the spot.

In an instant he rose to his feet and went down to the street where his nephew was standing. As soon as he saw him, he ran towards him and embraced him with the greatest joy; then, taking him by the hand, he led him into the house and, ill-dressed as he was, introduced him to all his household, and to all the priests who came to call upon him.

PRIDE HUMBLED BY GOD

Simon Turiajus lived in England, at the beginning of the thirteenth century. His great reputation for learning caused him to be chosen one of the professors in the great schools of Paris, where his eloquence procured for him so great renown that his name was known throughout the West of Europe. But the applause he received caused the demon of pride to find an entrance into his heart, and led him to speak contemptuously of the Church of God, its doctrine and its practices. One day he dared publicly to assert that he could easily prove the doctrines of the Church to be true, and just as easily prove that they were all false. But God was pleased to punish even in this world his audacious presumption. His memory suddenly failed him, and his intellect became so obscured that he could not distinguish even the letters of the alphabet one from the other, or repeat even the Lord's Prayer.

INTEMPERANCE

INTEMPERANCE

Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life; and that day come upon you suddenly.—Luke XXI, 34.

Wo to you that rise up early in the morning to follow drunkenness, and to drink till the evening, to be inflamed with wine.—The harp, and the lyre, and the timbrel, and the pipe, and wine are in your feasts: and the work of the Lord you regard not, nor do you consider the works of His Hands.—Is. V, 11-12.

Wine drunken with excess raiseth quarrels, and wrath, and many ruins.—Wine drunken with excess is bitterness of the soul.

—*Ecclus.* XXXI, 38-39.

THE EVIL OF ALCOHOL

The evil done by alcohol was fully realized by the governments of the belligerent countries in the great European war, and they prohibited the use of alcoholic beverages in their armies.

IMPRESSIVE WORDS TO A DRUNKARD

Take in your hand, take in your hand the cup of delusion, and, with your eyes on the consequences, however appalling—drink! The white bubbles that float on the top of the cup—they are only the tears of your wife. Drink on! You have drained her happiness. Take the gloomy cup anew. The drops look red—they are only the blood of your starving and neglected children. Drink, then—drink on. Take the horrible cup anew. Be not dismayed; you see only the gray hairs of your parents floating on the surface—you have drained their existence. Drink, then, and drink on. But you *must* take the cup; for, alas! it is no longer the cup of choice, but the cup of habit; no longer the cup of enjoyment, but the cup of punishment; no longer the cup of delusion, but the cup of necessity. Its pleasures are gone, whilst nothing remains but its bitterness.

—*Archbishop Ullathorne.*

VARIA

SUICIDE

The suicide is an unjust steward who makes away with his master's goods; he is a rebel against the Divine Majesty; he is a cowardly and disloyal soldier who abandons the post which has been entrusted to his care. While suicide is thus a violation of the Creator's supreme dominion over His creature, it is also an act of the deepest injustice against one's own self. We are bound to love ourselves with a reasonable love. This love of self is presupposed in the commandment of charity which ordains us to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. Now as murder is the greatest injustice we can perpetrate against our neighbour, so suicide is the greatest injustice we can inflict on ourselves. All crimes against nature are particularly hideous; this one outrages the fundamental law of nature, which prompts us to preserve our own corporal life.

—*Bishop Bellord.*

SUPERSTITION

Superstition arises from attributing to the Saints a power that they do not possess, either by nature or in virtue of the prayers of the Church. With this definition kept clearly and substantially before our minds, we can see how, unless they realize constantly the prerogatives of God and the supernatural character of religion, some of the faithful may fall into superstitious practices.

—*Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

Superstition arises from attributing to the Saints a power that is the possession of God alone and from the expectation that they

personally will grant favours and answers to petitions which it is within the power of Divinity alone to bestow. Many spurious prayers are circulated in which the language is such that it can be considered only as fostering superstition. When we are told, for example, that the recital of such a prayer, or its recital at fixed times, or a special number of times or days, will infallibly obtain from the Saint to whom it is addressed the favour asked; when it is believed that the swallowing of papers containing the pictures of the Blessed Virgin or another of the Saints will infallibly work a cure of disease; when we are informed that certain extravagant and impossible promises will be infallibly fulfilled through prayers to the Saints, we are, beyond doubt, in the region of superstition, for these things are nothing but the giving to creatures that which is the prerogative of God alone.—*Thomas F. Burke, C. S. P.*

THE LURE OF THE WORLD

How many a young man, fascinated by the pleasure-seeking life about him, is lured to spiritual and to social destruction! He begins by spending more than he can afford upon dress, theater-going, food and drink, and the myriad indulgences that entice on every side. To pay for these luxuries he must retrench expenditures that duty demands of him. His contribution to the support of home is minimized indefinitely, those who should be nearest and dearest to him may be in want of many little comforts, even of certain necessities, which ordinarily it would be in his power and should be his pleasure to supply; but the spirit of extravagance has transformed his generosity into selfishness and his sense of duty into an irritation at all restraint.
—*Francis Harvey.*

TURNING AWAY FROM THE LIGHT

For I had my back turned to the light, and my face upon the things enlightened, and so my face, with which I saw the things that were illustrated by the light, was not illuminated.—*St. Augustine.*

LOVE OF WORLDLY THINGS

I was miserable and every soul is miserable that is tied down by love to perishable things, and it is torn in pieces when it is separated from them, and then it feels that misery, by which it was also miserable before it lost them.—*St. Augustine.*

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

In Genoa, Italy, one of the first objects which attracts the traveler's attention as he leaves his ship is a beautiful statue of Columbus. This monument was placed there nearly four hundred years after Columbus discovered America. In his life he was scoffed at, abused, and neglected, and his great merit not recognized until too late for him to enjoy it.

INORDINATE WORLDLY LOVE

How little soever it be, if a thing be inordinately loved and regarded, it keeps thee back from the Sovereign Good, and corrupts the soul.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE MAD RUSH OF THE WORLD

On one occasion Professor Huxley was late in keeping an appointment in Belfast. Leaving the train, he hastily took a cab and shouted to the cabman, "Drive fast!" and away the cab went, down the street, around corners, etc., till the question arose in Professor Huxley's mind whether he had told the driver where to go, so he shouted to him: "Do you know where you are going?" Whereupon the driver replied: "No, sir; I don't know where I am going, but I am driving fast." Some who make a boast of seeking the truth—the so-called progressive minds—remind one sometimes of this incident. They are "driving fast" without knowing where they are going.

You have provoked Him who made you, the eternal God, offering sacrifice to devils and not to God.—For you have forgotten God who brought you up, and you have grieved Jerusalem who nursed you.
—*Bar.* IV, 7-8.

The wicked have said, reasoning with themselves, but not right: The time of our life is short and tedious.—Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments: and let not the flower of the time pass by us.—Wisd. II, 7.

Be not thou afraid, when a man shall be made rich, and when the glory of his house shall be increased.—For when he shall die he shall take nothing away; nor shall his glory descend with him.—He shall go into the generations of his fathers: and he shall never see light. —Man when he was in honour did not understand: he hath been compared to senseless beasts, and made like to them.
—*Ps.* XLVIII, 17-18, 20-21.

THE HAPPINESS OF THIS WORLD

Goethe, the famous poet, had wealth, health, and the admiration of the world, in short, all things that the world values so highly; yet he was accustomed to say in his old age that never was he in his long life truly happy for even twenty-four consecutive hours.

THE VANITY OF WORLDLY THINGS

From the caverned rocks of St. Helena, the great Napoleon, then an exile, was gazing over the troubled deep. Sea, earth and sky alike claimed his attention as he reviewed in his mind the empires of the world, at one time boasting of an enviable place among the nations, but soon crumbling to the dust from whence they came. Then, having considered the fate of great men, how to-day they are the idols of the hour, and to-morrow they are no more, he suddenly exclaimed: "The nations of the earth pass away, the thrones of world-wide kingdoms fall to the ground, and the Church of God alone remains."—*Frederick Reuter.*

FASHION

But woe be to thee, O torrent of human custom! Who shall stop thy course? How long will it be ere thou art dried up? How long wilt thou carry down the children of Eve into that great and

frightful sea which those who are the best embarked shall hardly pass over?—*St. Augustine.*

EXTRAVAGANCE IN DRESS

Extravagance in dress is often not even regarded as a venial offense in morals. It masquerades under the name of "a proper pride," "decent regard for appearances," "self-respect," or any of the well-sounding phrases with which we cover our follies and our sins. How many bitter heart-burnings are caused by the extravagant girl? How her selfish indulgence grows by what it feeds upon, and ill-temper gains more and more possession of her character. Happy is she if her moral sense does not become blunted, and she wakes to find that her extravagance and love of display have not yet led her into the path of sordid worldliness, whence there is little hope of returning.—*Francis Harvey.*

EXTRAVAGANCE LEADS TO DISHONESTY

This mad thirst for enjoyment it is that leads so many of our young people into extravagance and its attendant evils. We will confine ourselves to the consideration of one of the sad results of this pleasure-loving spirit of our day, the violation of the Seventh Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal"; a commandment which comes to us now partly drowned by sounds of revelry, the cries of a degenerate commercialism and the platitudes of the worldly wise. But the commandment was first given amid the thunders of Sinai, and in the ear of God and of God's Church those thunders are still echoing, and, as of old, sound a warning anathema to the sinner. Heaven and earth may pass away, may change from age to age in their passing, but not one syllable of God's law shall pass, not one jot of His penalties shall fail.

The first step in this downward path is extravagance—very venial in appearance, like all first wrongward steps—but condemned by the sure instinct that is in every uncorrupted heart. Extravagance prepares the way for thievery, just as surely as immodest words and words of double meaning are the forerunners of debauchery. It begets the feverish longing for money, which is the spirit of gambling, and gambling is in reality an ambition to get something for nothing, and finds its ultimate, legitimate expression in common theft.—*Francis Harvey.*

WORDLINESS

Most men with little heed as to whence they have come, or to whither they are going, place all their thoughts and all their care upon the vain and fleeting goods of this life; and contrary to nature and to right order, they voluntarily give themselves up to serve things, of which their reason tells them they should be masters.

—*Pope Leo* XIII.

THE SIN OF THE RICH MAN

In one of the parables Our Lord places before us a typical man of pleasure, one who would be esteemed by many men at all times as a model of what a man should be, honourable and enviable. He

was a man of wealth and refinement, a man against whom no vice or injustice is recorded, who spent his money freely, enjoying to the utmost the gifts of God, and sharing them genially with his compeers. He led a blameless, joyful life. He died, regretted, no doubt, by many, and leaving a good name behind him. But his soul? "The rich man died and was buried in hell." And the reason of his condemnation is given. It was not that he had abandoned himself to gross vices or to irreligion; it was only that he had practiced no self-denial, no austerity, but had enjoyed the gifts of God in an ungodly way. "Remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented" (Luke xvi, 25).—*Bishop Bellord.*

TWO KINDS OF WORLDLINGS

What is a worldling? One who practically ignores the existence of God, who is addicted to false pleasures, and the profane joys and criminal intrigues which the world sanctions, but which God condemns; one who is unmortified, who does not know what it is to check passion; one who hates Christ in his soul because the life of Christ rebukes him. We are all familiar with the portrait. Every day we meet it at the railway station, at the hotel, at the theater, the hero of a fashionable novel, the central figure in the police court, or, oftener still, the "respectable man in society."

But there is another worldling. One who calls himself a Christian, but is only a Christian through fear of God; who commits no grave sins, but goes as far in venial sins as he possibly can; who likes the world and half wishes that there were no Heaven but the world; who is often seen in places of public amusement, very seldom in the house of God; who is often seen in the public streets ministering to his own vanity, but is never seen in lanes ministering to the poor of Christ; who thinks that religion, that is, much prayer and frequent reception of the Sacraments is a very good thing for children, but is scarcely fitted for men; who does not know how God can be pleased by fasting; who goes to confession but falls again into the same sins; who is fond of jesting about the holiest things; who is a constant reader of the corruption of the day; who would think it a very hard penance to be asked to read a page of the "Lives of the Saints" or "The Imitation of Christ", that is another portrait, and with that, too, we are still more painfully familiar. It looks very like that strangest of all creations, a Catholic worldling. A Catholic worldling, one who declares himself a follower of Christ, and yet is a follower of the world which Christ abhorred.

—*P. A. Sheehan.*

POSSESSING RICHES, BUT POOR IN SPIRIT

There is a material difference between having poison and being poisoned. Apothecaries have almost all kinds of poisons for use on several occasions, and yet are not poisoned, because they have not the poison in their bodies, but in their store. So you may possess riches without being poisoned with them, if you keep them in your house or purse, and not in your heart. To be rich in effect and poor in affection is the great happiness of a Christian; for by this

means he has the benefit of riches for this world, and the merit of poverty for the world to come.—*St. Francis de Sales.*

BAD CHRISTIANS DESERVE GREATER CONDEMNATION THAN PAGANS

As Macarius was wandering among the Egyptian tombs he saw the skull of a mummy, and turning it over he asked it to whom it belonged. It answered, "To a pagan"; he then replied "Where is thy soul?" and the skull replied "In hell." Macarius then said, "How deep?" "The depth is greater than the distance from heaven to earth," answered the skull. Then Macarius asked, "Are there any deeper than thou art?" and the skull replied, "Yes, the Jews are deeper." And again the hermit said, "Are there any deeper than the Jews?" "Yes, in sooth," replied the skull, "the Christians whom Jesus Christ hath redeemed, and who show in their actions that they despise His doctrine, are deeper still."

This ancient legend forcibly teaches a great lesson: The measure of responsibility depends upon our light.

THE CONVERSION OF ST. NORBERT

St. Norbert, when already raised to the office of sub-deacon, lived a life of unrestrained pleasure. He even refused higher orders in the Church, for fear his enjoyments would be curtailed. One day, bent on pleasure as usual, he started on horseback to a neighbouring town. Overtaken by a terrible thunderstorm he could find no refuge anywhere, so he was obliged to ride on. Suddenly a flash of lightning knocked him senseless to the ground. After a long interval he regained consciousness, only to remember the purpose of his journey, and to feel that his sad plight was a punishment from Almighty God. With these thoughts in his mind, he cried out in the words of St. Paul: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" To which a voice replied: "Turn away from evil and do good; seek after peace and pursue it."

This was the turning-point of Norbert's life. Forsaking all pleasures, he gave himself up to the practice of self-denial. He became the founder of a strict religious Order and died a Saint.

—*Frederick Reuter.*

HUMAN RESPECT

It is the inordinate desire of pleasing men, or a fear of displeasing them, whereby we are led either to omit the good we ought to do, or to do the evil which we ought to avoid. In other words, human respect is that frame of mind which leads us to neglect our duty as Christians and Catholics for the sake of what others will say or think or do.—*H. G. Hughes.*

Human respect is a potent factor especially with young men. There are so many who have generous impulses, and eager desires to serve God faithfully, but these so quickly perish at the loud, scornful laugh or ribald jest of a bad companion. "So you have turned Methodist," one says with a sneer, and the good resolutions so eagerly taken wither away at once. With others it is merely the trouble of perseverance which is sufficient to cause discouragement and failure. It is so much easier to go with the tide; it demands

some courage to discountenance the lewd jest or abstain from the forbidden enjoyment, but even to get up on a Sunday morning to assist at Holy Mass, or to go without meat on a Friday, is too much effort for some of these once eager neophytes. Confession is not a congenial task to the natural man, and when the first fervour of conversion has grown cold, it needs some courage and constancy to persevere faithfully in its habitual use. And so these poor souls fall away from the means of grace by which alone their feeble spiritual life could be strengthened and fostered, and, left without these supernatural and refreshing showers, the good seed is withered in their hearts.—*Bede Camm, O. S. B.*

He that shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him the Son of Man shall be ashamed, when He shall come in His Majesty, and that of His Father and of the holy angels.—Luke IX, 26.

If thou considerest well what thou art within thyself, thou wilt not care what men say of thee. Man beholds the face; but God looks upon the heart. Man considers the actions; but God weighs the intentions.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

Thou art not more holy if thou art praised; nor anything the worse if thou art dispraised.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

When Toussaint, a great infidel, who wrote many bad books and boasted of his atheism, was on his death-bed he called for a priest, made his confession and, before receiving the last Sacraments, declared before his fellow-infidels present that he was sorry for having posed as an atheist, that he had professed atheism because it was fashionable for those calling themselves philosophers to proclaim themselves by a show of atheism as above other men.

—*Ferreol Girardey, C. SS. R.*

Gondebrand, King of the Burgundians, was an Arian, and refused to believe the teaching of the Catholic Church. Some years after he began to reign he saw that he was wrong, and, as he desired to save his soul, he took the resolution of becoming a Catholic. But he was afraid to do this openly, being afraid, as he said, that his people might turn against him, and so he went to Avitus, the Bishop, and asked him to receive him privately into the Catholic Church. But Avitus gave him this answer. "Our Lord has declared that unless we confess Him before men, He will deny us before His Father in Heaven. You must therefore, O King, rise above all worldly consideration, and not lose an eternal kingdom for the sake of an earthly one." The king did not answer; but his courage failed him, and he lived and died an Arian.

How can we avoid the serious fault of human respect?

In the first place we must, from the very beginning, take up the right position; and with a calm firmness let it be seen by all that we are not to be moved from it by any worldly and unworthy considerations whatever. We should take this resolution especially

when the circumstances of life lead us to take up our abode among strangers. They will watch us; and the first few weeks will show them, and probably decide for us, whether we are going to be on the side of God or of the world. When you, my younger hearers, go forth into life, then, I entreat of you, guard against human respect. Remember the holy lessons of your youth; take your stand boldly from the first among the followers of Jesus Christ. How many a young man's life has been wrecked because he was not firm at starting. A change of scene, even if only temporary, is often a source of danger. New temptations will be at hand in a new place. New acquaintances will be there to lead a man astray. This, too, is an occasion for a determined resolution, from the very first, not to give way to human respect. When, again, the voice of conscience has made itself heard, after a retreat, for instance, or a mission, or some warning from God, and we feel that we must change our lives, human respect will not fail to drag us back if we will allow it to do so. What will people say, if they see me giving up this or that pleasure; if they observe me frequenting the Sacraments oftener; if my attitude in church becomes more devout, and I am seen to pray? Care not, dear brother, what they say. In a week or two they will cease to say anything, and if you persist, they will respect you in their heart of hearts. To avoid the dangers, then, of human respect, take a firm stand at the beginning.

Secondly, we must be imbued with the spirit of faith—practical faith; the faith of one who is convinced of the great truths of our holy religion; who has, by serious thought, made them sink deep into his heart, and whose will is influenced and strengthened by the thought of God and eternity, the value of his soul, the great reward and the terrible punishment.

Thirdly, we must watch for this enemy. It may easily find an entrance unperceived. We must check it in regard to small things, or it will soon influence us in a greater. Hence there is an urgent need for careful self-examination on this matter.

Lastly, we must regularly and devoutly make use of all the means of grace, in which we shall find strength. In the strength of these same means, the glorious martyrs went with all courage to a bitter and painful death; and in this strength we shall overcome all forms of persecution and temptation, and, God helping us, shall make the martyr's choice, and hold ourselves ready on all occasions to confess Him before men, who one day shall confess us before the face of our Father in Heaven.—*H. G. Hughes.*

What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?—*Matt.* XVI, 26.

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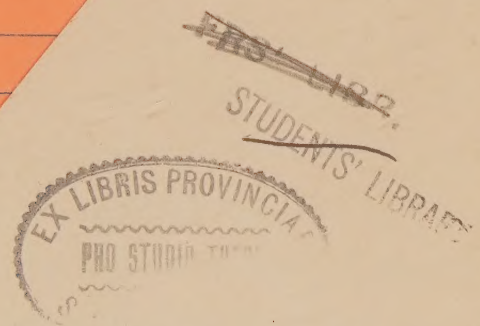

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